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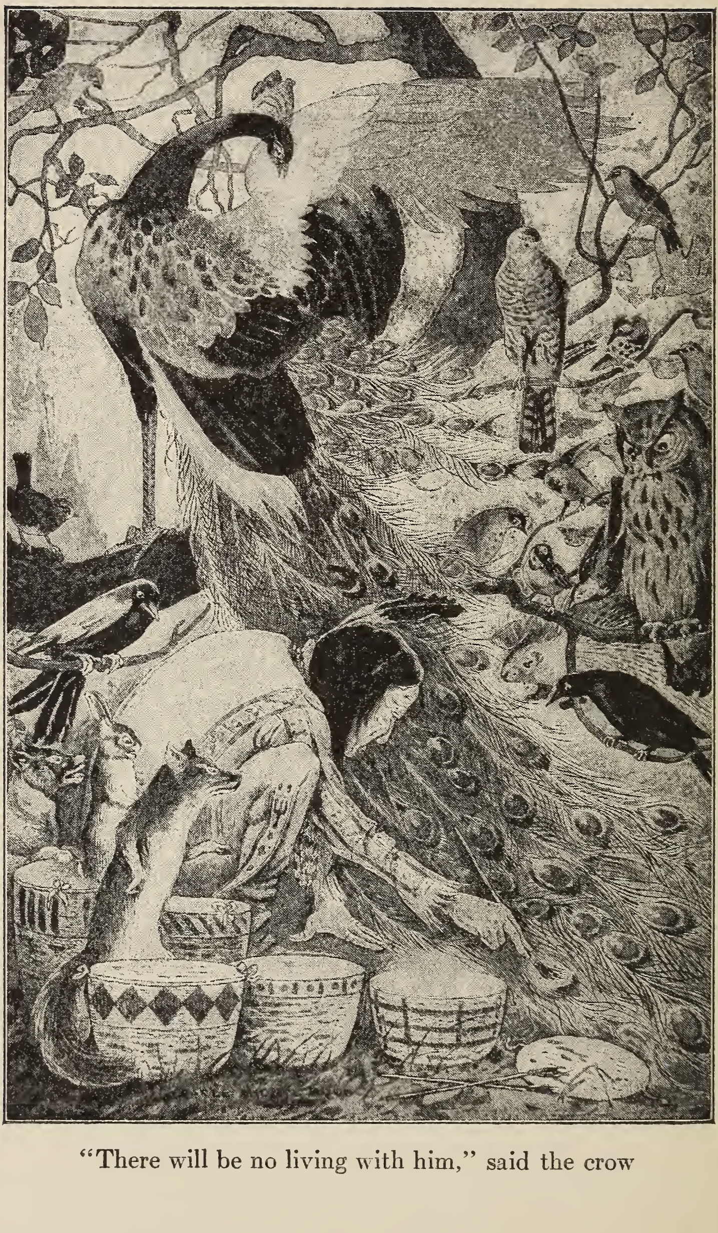
WIGWAM WONDER TALES



"There will be no living with him," said the crow

WIGWAM WONDER TALES

BY

WILLIAM THOMPSON

ILLUSTRATED BY

CARLE MICHEL BOOG

NEW YORK
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DEDICATION

This book is affectionately dedicated to H. T., who for ten years has been my constant companion. We have travelled together from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean. Have climbed glaciers of Alaska and shivered in the fogs of Newfoundland. Have rocked in the crafts of the North Sea fishermen. Have looked from the Phœnician ruins of Eze to the island of Corsica. Have enjoyed the nature smiles of southern Europe from Italy to Setubal, the ancient Cetubriga of the Romans. Have strolled along the highways and byways of Germany, Holland, France, Belgium, Moresnet, Italy, and romped together in the cork-groves of Portugal and the olive-groves of Spain. We have shared the same room in spooky inns along the trails of Don Quixote in La Mancha, and have ridden fourth-class with a first-class ticket hundreds of kilometres . . . because dogs were not allowed in first-class compartments on European railways.

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WIGWAM WONDER TALES

Wigwam Wonder Tales

THE GIANT BUTTERFLY AND THE MOUSE

WHEN Ayas was a small child, hardly able to walk, he would try to catch the sunbeams that played with his fingers and toes. Onitu, an old woman who had noticed his efforts, smiled and said: "He will be a sun-catcher some day; in all truth, Ayas will be a sun-catcher."

Of course, the people did not know the meaning of her strange remark, and looked serious.

Ayas grew to be a man, and travelled the long, lonely trails of the forest in search for game. One day, being very tired, as it was oppressively warm, he lay down to sleep. During his slumber something that passed scorched his leather coat. This made him very angry, for upon the coat he had worked long days with needle and thread, putting many colored beads in fantastic design. As he arose, his coat fell from his back, and the thread holding the beads parted, scattering them upon the ground.

"I'll find out my enemy!" declared Ayas, so loud that the animals of the forest became frightened and ran to their holes, or scampered away in many directions.

Unstringing his bow, lashed many times around with caribou sinew, he made a snare across the road, and over the spot where he had been sleeping. Then he went home.

The next day the sun did not rise, or the next, and the medicine-men were consulted; but they were as much mystified as the people, who met in their lodges, many of them too frightened to speak. "Had the Great Spirit deserted his people? Was this the end of all things?"

Ayas' sister, who suspected her brother had been up to some mischief, went to him and said: "What have you been doing that the sun does not give light?"

He replied: "I set a snare the other day; I will go and see if I have caught anything."

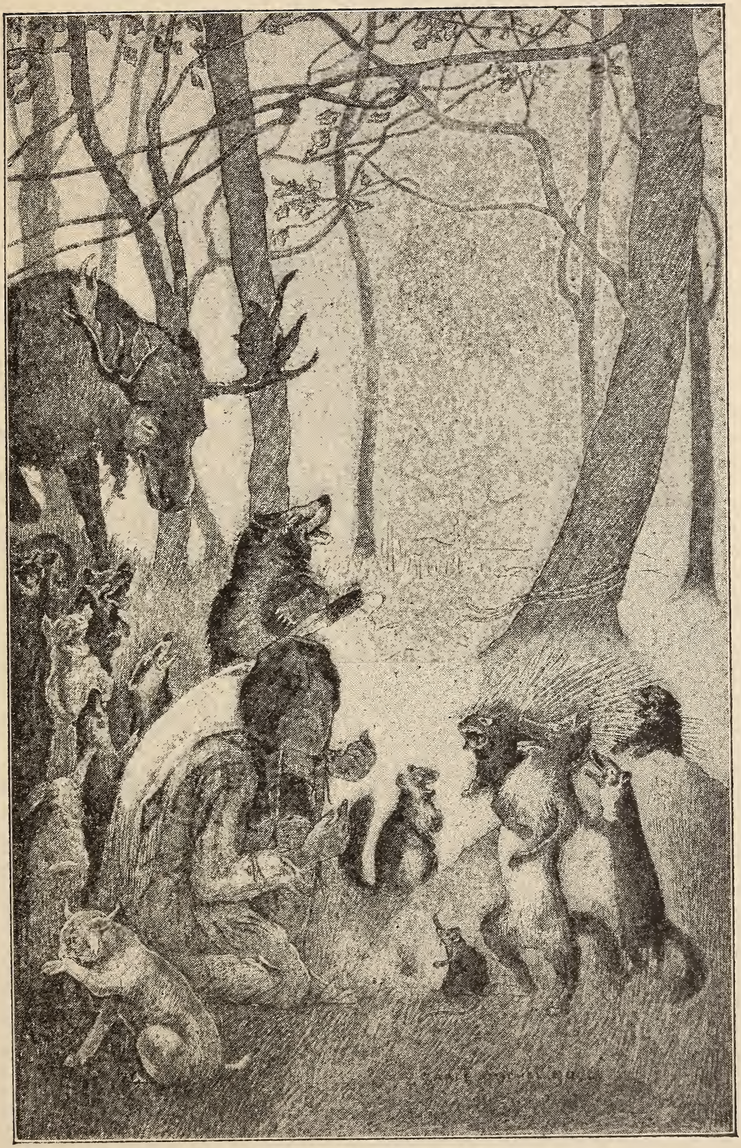
So he went back to the wood where he had set his snares, and the nearer he approached the hotter it became. When he arrived at the opening of the trail he saw he had snared the sun. He tried to release it, but it would not keep still, jumping up and down so fast Ayas could not grasp the snares.

"Keep still!" he cried, but his command was of no avail. So he called all the animals from near and far to help him; but it was so hot they dared not approach, fearing their fur would be scorched, and as winter was drawing near, they would not risk that which kept them warm.

A wee ground-mouse was looking on from his tiny hole under a great ant-hill that had been deserted. He called to Ayas and said: "Go to the giant butterfly who makes wings over there in the dead pine. If he will agree to make for me a pair of wings and guarantee a good fit that I may fly back should the sun take me with him, I'll release it."

Every one laughed. What a joke! This tiny mouse offering to release the sun when the great animals of the forest dare not attempt it! A lynx, just ready to spring at the silly little creature, was prevented from doing so by Ayas, who gave him a stroke across his snout. This is the reason the lynx has such a short nose.

Ayas looked at the ant-hill. How large it was, and how small the beings that had



Every one laughed. What a joke! This tiny mouse
offering to release the sun!

made it. "Perhaps the mouse can do as it agrees," he thought.

It was so hot the grass began to scorch, and leaves became seared. Something must be done.

"Go to the butterfly and tell him I wish to speak to him," Ayas demanded of the mouse.

"He will not come and scorch his wings. He has the finest pair in all the lands about here," answered the mouse.

Ayas thought the mouse was right; so he started off for the wing factory. When he got near the old tree he called, and slowly, from a great hole in the trunk peered the face of Mr. Butterfly.

"Come down," said Ayas. "I wish to discuss a business offer with you." The great winged creature slowly drew himself out of the hole, and spreading his wings, glided to the earth. He was so enormous Ayas was but a tiny being compared to him.

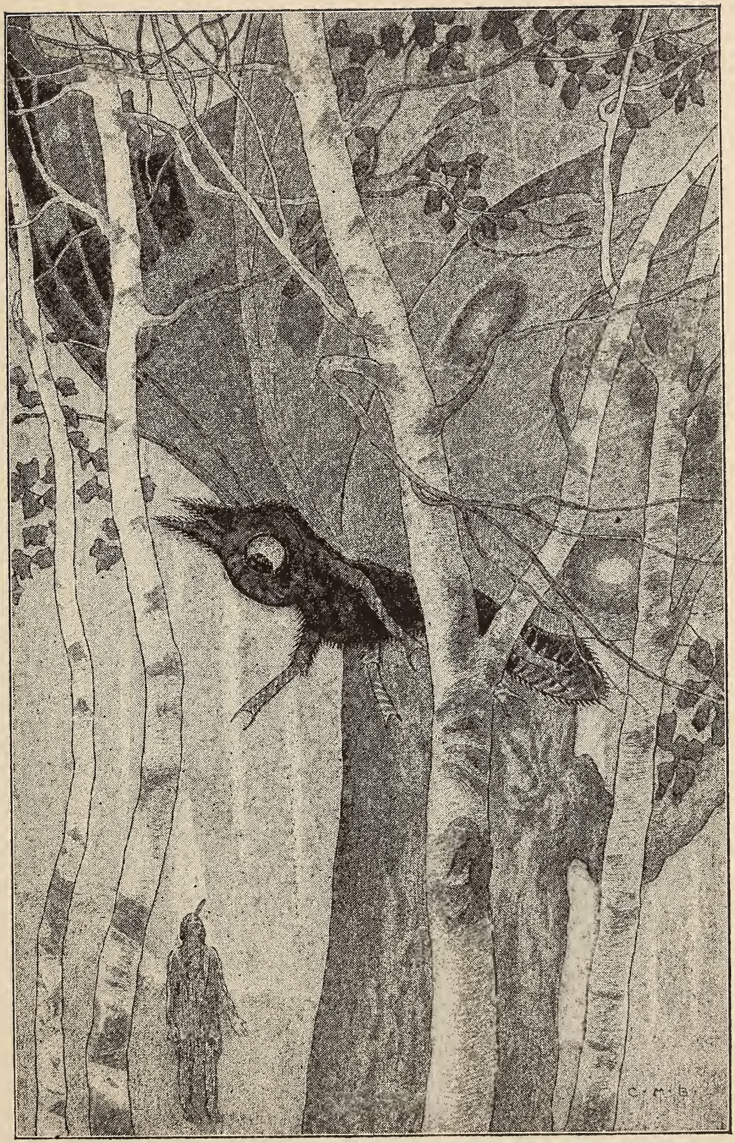
"The sun has become entangled in my snare," said Ayas, "and a young and very tiny mouse promises that he will release it if you will furnish him with a pair of wings. The fit must be guaranteed as well as the quality, as he may be required to make a long journey, and must be assured they will stand the strain; and in addition, they must be made of material that will be able to withstand great heat."

"What will be my compensation?" asked Mr. Butterfly.

"What do you expect?" asked Ayas.

"That is not the way I bargain," replied Mr. Butterfly. "What is it worth to you?"

Ayas thought a moment. Knowing that if the sun was not released, soon all the hunting-grounds would be destroyed by fire, he decided to make a good offer, so he said: "I'll give you five portions of clover honey, two hundred fresh wild roses,



"Come down," said Ayas. "I wish to discuss a business offer with you"

and build a long ladder to your hole, that you may not need to fly when you grow old."

This appealed to Mr. Butterfly, for his wing joints did not work as smoothly as when he was younger.

"Throw in a measure of goose oil and it's a bargain," said he.

"Very well," said Ayas. "Have you any wings in stock that will fit?"

"I cannot tell without seeing your friend; bring him here and upon your return I'll have a few pairs ready for a try-on."

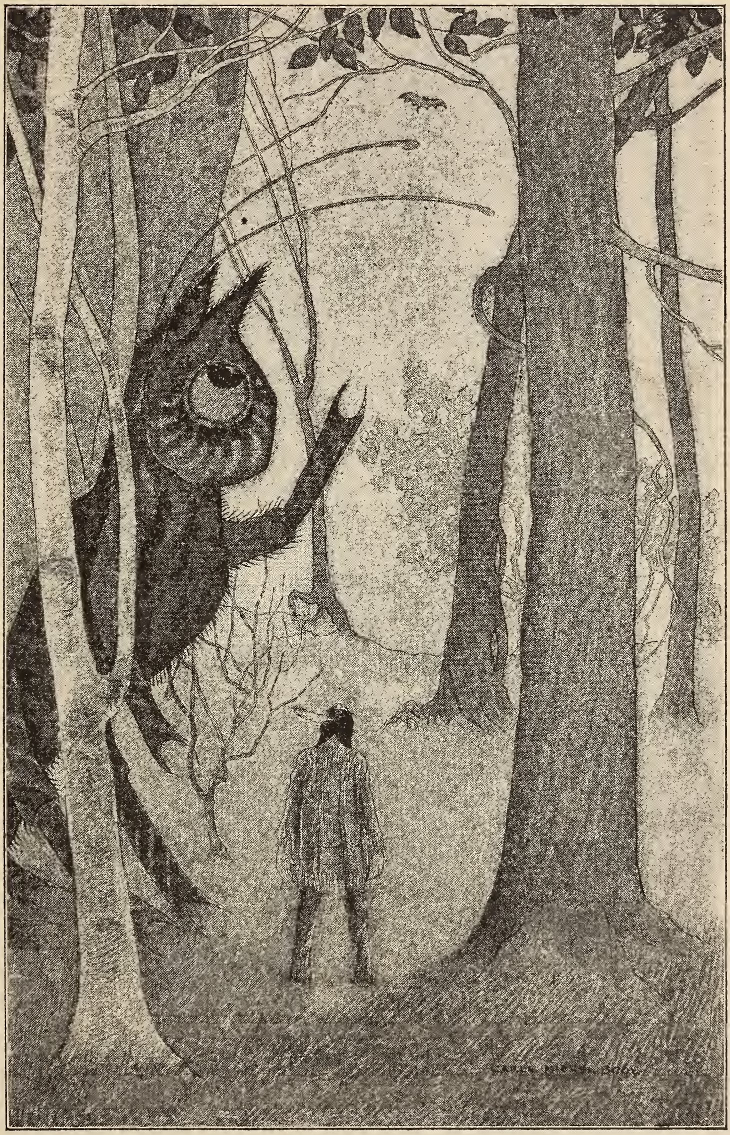
So Ayas went back and told the mouse he had fixed up the matter, so they returned together, the mouse in the pouch of Ayas' coat. Many wings were tried on, and finally little Johnny Mouse selected a pair that seemed satisfactory, although not bigger than the wings of a sparrow.

"Go up the tree and fly down," said Mr. Butterfly, and up crawled the mouse until he had gone so far they could not see him. Over their heads they heard a little voice calling, "They fit perfectly. My! this is wonderful!" And down glided the wee mouse in little circles to the ground.

"Now to keep my promise," said he, flying around Ayas' head and settling on his right shoulder.

Saying good-afternoon to Mr. Butterfly, who was to call for his supplies the following day, Ayas and the mouse returned to the struggling sun. Going to the strings of sinew, the mouse began to gnaw, and very soon, one after another of the strands holding the sun parted. With one great effort, it burst the remaining bonds and started again on its path of day, giving light to all the world.

If it had not been for the mouse the sun would have remained a prisoner, and there would have been no day. If it had not been for the sun, bats would have always remained mice.



Over their heads they heard a little voice calling, "They fit perfectly"

WACTU, THE ANIMAL PAINTER

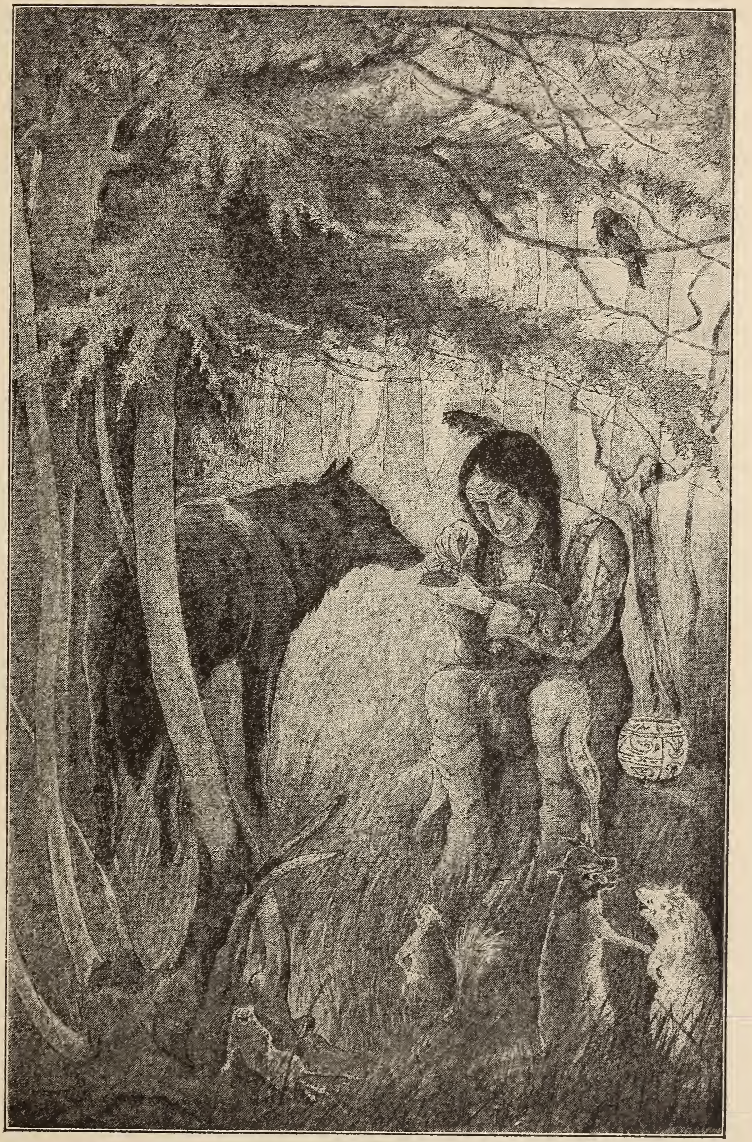
AS long as the birds could remember, Wactu had lived among them. This was a very long time ago, and before the rays of the sun had penetrated the deep mist that surrounded the earth. It was only now and then that the people living in the lowlands could see the golden shafts of light tipping the great mountain-tops as they stood like mighty gods, covered with garments of snow. The snows, melting slowly, formed lakes high up in the mountain valleys, and across the great glaciers and fields of ice all the colors of the painter's palette passed like a pageant of beauty among the mountain peaks.

For ever so long Wactu had stripped the white birches that he called the "white ghosts of the forest" of their bark and made baskets of it, for what reason the magpie and owl had been very much perplexed to know.

One morning a large timber-wolf called to discuss a matter of importance with Wactu, who was the King of the Kingdom of Animals, and master of the woodlands.

"I'm growing very tired of so much sameness of color among my subjects," he said to the wolf. "It's always black or white. Why don't you go up the mountain and bathe in the lake and roll on the snows, and become beautiful of color? See!" pointing to the rays of light piercing the mist, "See! Is that not more fair than your gray costume?"

But old wolf only grunted an indifferent acknowledgment, for he had little sentiment for anything but his appetite. His indifference caused Wactu to ejaculate: "You are the most acrimonious of all my people. Go bring me a young



This he did, much to the amazement of the beaver

beaver, and mind you do not devour him before he serves my purpose."

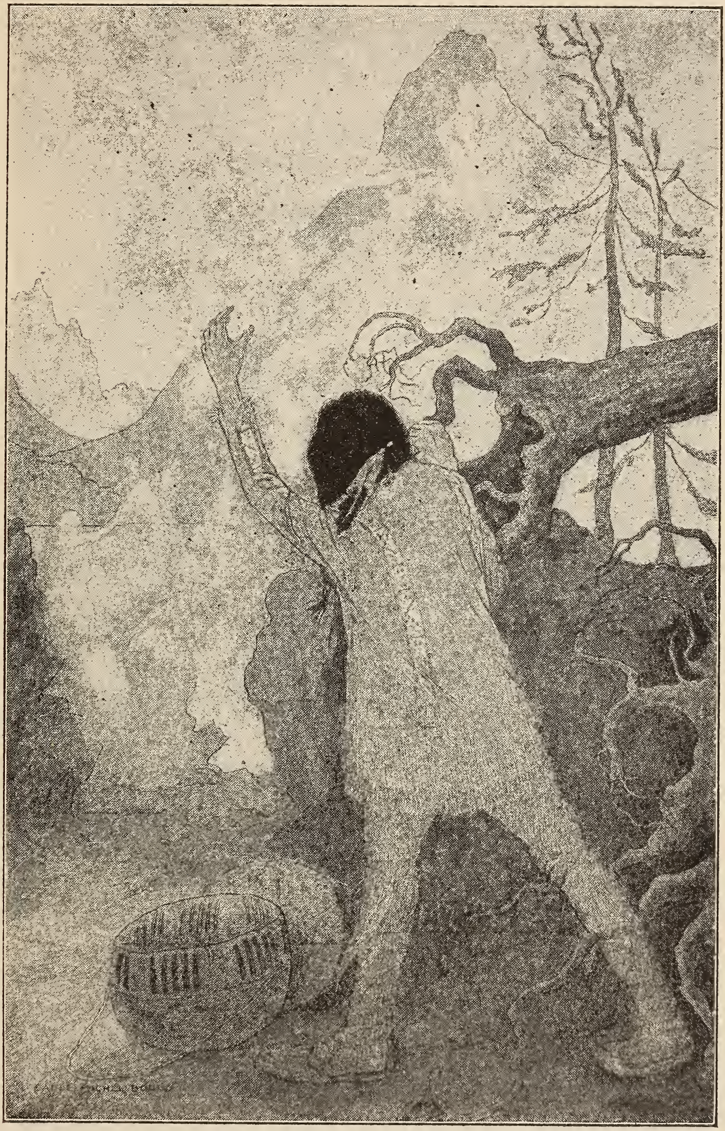
Wactu had decided upon a plan by which there was to be a change of fashion among his subjects, and he began preparations then and there.

Old wolf returned with a young whimpering beaver-cub, crying at the top of his voice, for Mr. Wolf had not been overcareful in handling the youth, who, being accustomed to the tender solicitude of fond parents, did not understand the rougher ways of one who at any moment was liable to devour him. Wactu instructed the wolf to hold Young Beaver tight as he wanted to pluck a few hairs from his back and tail. This he did, much to the amazement of the beaver, who, though crying lustily, was more frightened than hurt.

"Take him back to his mother," demanded Wactu, "and mind your appetite does not prompt you to rashness, for I may want you to bring him to me again." So Mr. Wolf disappeared in the wood.

Wactu always had his suspicions that Mr. Wolf feasted on Young Beaver, for when he needed more hair for his brushes, he always looked carefully for the places he had plucked, but could not find them; so he of course knew that Mr. Wolf had not brought him the same animal. As Mr. Wolf had served him well he never made any reference to the matter.

For many days that followed Wactu made journeys to the mountains, and waited patiently for the color-sprites to dance on the snow and lakes; and as they appeared, he caught them and thrust them into his baskets. There were red, blue, green, orange, and yellow sprites—indeed, all the colors of the rainbow. Several times one end of the arch dipped into the waters of the lakes, and as Wactu knew the spirits of his departed friends formed the beautiful



Wactu waited patiently for the color-sprites to dance on the snow and lakes

colors, he was careful not to capture them, so waited for the rainbow to pass before collecting material for his interesting undertaking.

When Wactu returned to his lodge, the owls, eagles, and hawks would go far out on the limbs of the tall trees so that he could not hear them, and discuss the state of his mind, for they had "never seen him do such strange things before." Once or twice they flew down, unbeknown to their master, and lifted the baskets, but, finding them very light, they were convinced that they contained nothing that would do them harm.

Being King of the Kingdom of Animals and Birds, Wactu knew the language of all his people; so one morning, while he was tying up the beaver hairs and making brushes of different sizes—some with long handles and some with short—he called the skylark, the long-eared owl, the raven, the sparrow-hawk, the cuckoo, the chaffinch, the gray wag-tail, the spotted flycatcher, the crested titmouse, the woodpecker, the robin, the nightingale, the blackbird, the crow, and all the other feathered people of his empire, and said:

"My good people, it will be many thousands of years before the mists and clouds surrounding this great world are dispersed by the goddess of the sun. It is my purpose to hasten the work of Nature, by painting all of my people in the colors of the rainbow. Could you bathe in the rays of the sun, I would be saved all my trouble. You would then be like a queen on her throne, arrayed in all the glories of color. Who will be the first to change his or her plain garment for one of beauty? I have collected all the colors to complete Nature's works."

. . . .

"I will," called Mr. Peacock, as Wactu reached for his colors, and placed them beside him in rows.

"Step right up and I will begin," said Wactu in a pleased tone. So the peacock, with his long flowing tail trailing behind him, his head bowed in an embarrassed, coy way, approached Wactu, who, after placing him in a position most convenient, began to apply the mystical tints that were to make Mr. Peacock the most vain and conceited of all featherdom.

Beginning at the head, he painted the neck, wings, and body. When the tail was to be renovated, he had to stand up and go around, as it was so long. Once or twice he stepped on it. The peacock winced though it did not hurt him at all.

"There will be no living with him," said the crow as he noticed the peacock straighten up and throw his head back in a haughty manner.

"Right you are," said the raven.

"Such arrogance," said the wren, loud enough for Mr. Peacock to hear.

Wactu, having completed his toilet,

asked him to step off a bit so that he could see if the colors had run. This he did 'midst expressions of admiration from some, and, Wactu was sorry to know, suppressed jeers of others.

"Me next," said Miss Robin Redbreast as she surveyed the plain, soiled whiteness of her clothing.

"Get on my knee," said Wactu in a gentle voice, for she was very small and timid. "What colors for you, Miss Robin?"

"Red on my breast, and for the others, those that will not soil easily."

In the meantime, Mr. Peacock, who had always heretofore mingled with his people on an equal social footing, had strutted away, and was standing alone in self-satisfied admiration, his beautiful tail spread like a giant fan. The humming-bird afterward told his mate he heard him say, "I am more beautiful than the sun," and Mrs.

Humming-Bird replied, "I really believe he thinks it is so."

One by one the birds were bedecked with new garments. The old fogies like the raven, crow, and blackbirds said, "None of it for us," and went away quite satisfied with their old clothes.

There were many animals who had come out of mere idle curiosity, standing about wondering what would happen to them if old Wactu did not use up all of his colors. Mr. Porcupine felt quite confident that the royal decorator would not insist upon any reform in *his* apparel, no matter what changes he made in the others.

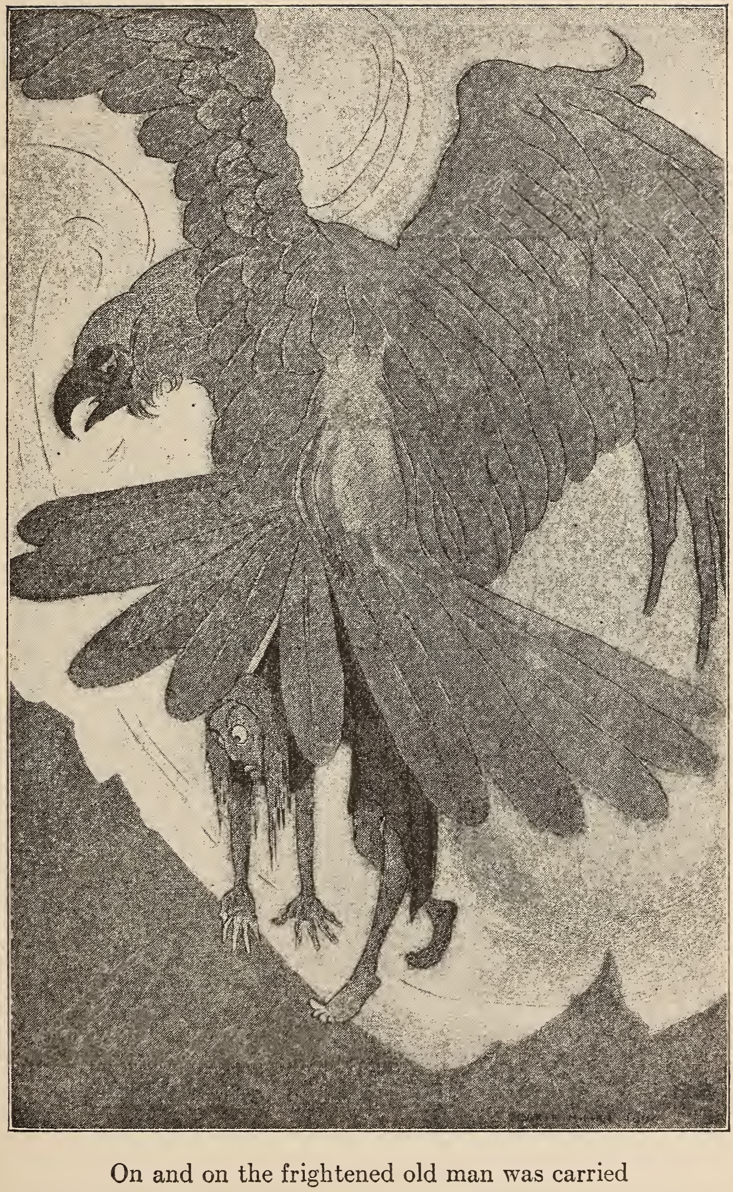
ALITOCI AND THE GIANT BIRDS

ALITOCI, a beaver chief, who had become too old to work, spent most of his time when the weather was not too cold along the rivers, fishing. He had three dogs that helped him in winter, but in summer they did no work, though they must eat; so Alitoci fished for them.

One day he was sitting by a dark water-hole full of fish, saying to himself: "Here shall I get plenty of food for my faithful dogs."

So he fished until he had caught all he could carry. As he was not strong, he had but few. He climbed up the bank to return home.

It was growing dark, and as his head was bowed from age, he could not see a great bird hovering over him. This bird



On and on the frightened old man was carried

was enormous in size, and its wings spread like the limbs of a large tree. Suddenly it swooped upon him, and took him up toward the clouds that were piled in the heavens like great banks of snow. On and on the frightened old man was carried. Still remembering his faithful dogs, he held on to his strings of fish until his hands were so tired he had to let them fall to the earth, many thousands of feet below.

His coat was old and he could hear the sinew giving under his weight, for though aged, he was still a heavy man, and there was a great strain on the coat.

The old man could see only the wings of the giant bird as they went up and down, slowly, in flight.

"Where are you taking me?" said he in great terror; but the bird did not reply.

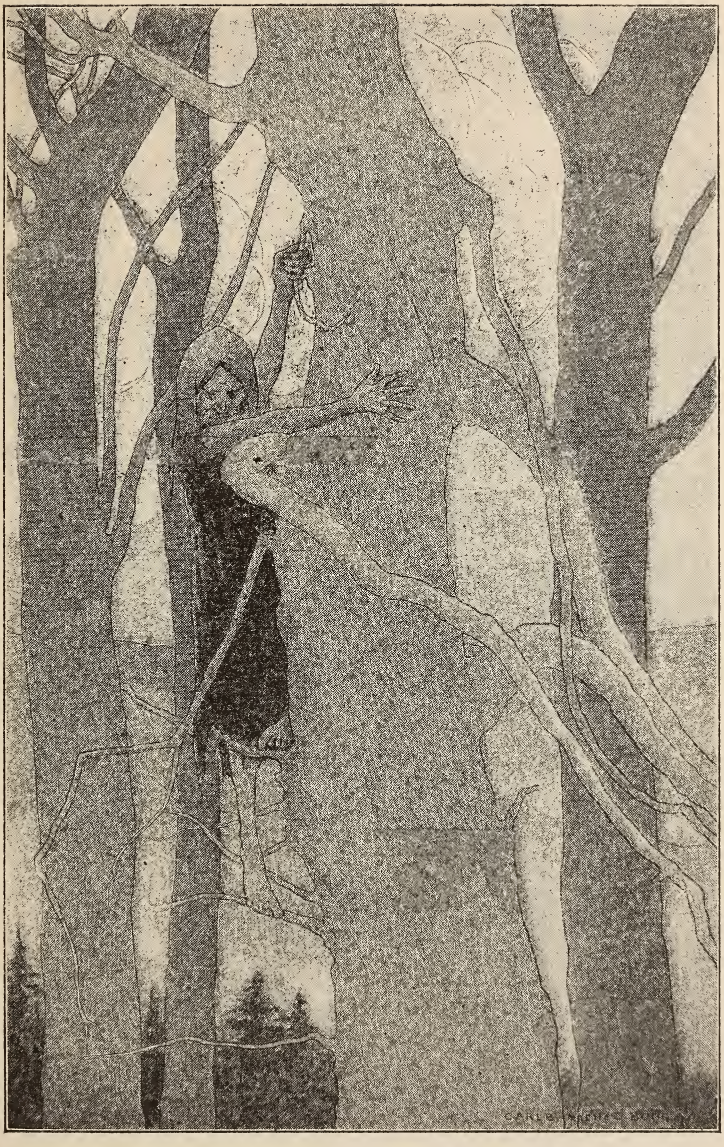
After a long journey over rivers and mountains, he was dropped into a large nest that rested on the limbs of a dead tree. The bird said to his young ones, who seemed very much frightened: "Take good care of the old man; I will go for food." So the bird departed to seek young animals like the rabbit, ermine, and small fox, as his children were too young to eat the larger game.

When it was growing light, for the morning dawned while the father bird was away, the mother returned. She was not quite so large and strong as her husband, but she also was big enough to carry a man for miles through the air.

"How does it happen that you smell of a man?" she asked her children.

"We should smell of a man when father brought one here for us," the young ones said in chorus, without meaning to deceive their mother.

They were so large, although very young birds, that they could easily hide the man under their wings, and their mother did



Down the big tree he lowered himself

not know he was there, which was well for the old man, for she would have eaten him had she known the truth.

The old man trembled so that it shook the birds, and the mother, thinking them ill, said: "Why do you shake so; are you not well?"

"Oh, yes," they replied, "we are very well indeed."

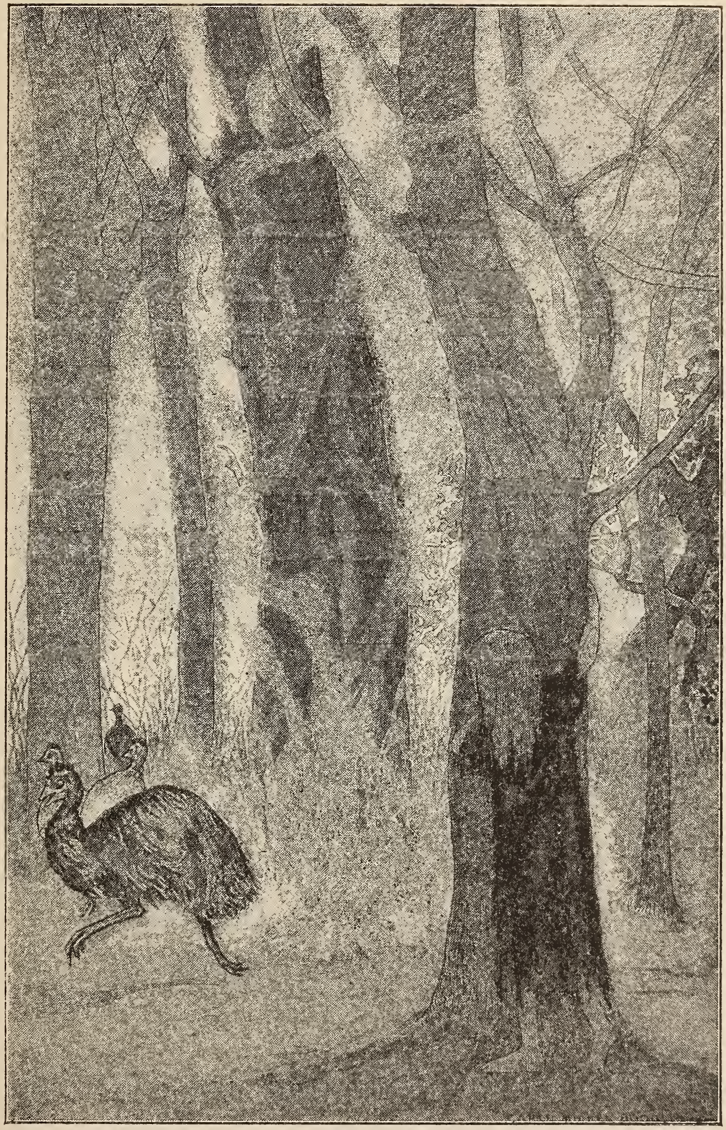
She seemed satisfied.

The old man thought of his poor dogs who were waiting for food, and of the fish he had lost after working so hard to catch them. The fear for his own safety worried him, too, but greatest of all his troubles was the weight of the birds sitting on him, and the added weight of the mother caused him still more distress. When the sun came up he was sure he would be seen.

As the sun rose higher and higher, one by one the birds fell asleep. "Now is my chance," thought the old man, lame and out of breath. So out of the nest he crawled and down the big tree he lowered himself. He waited at times to hear if there was any chattering in the nest, but heard none, so he went on and reached the ground in safety.

"Now," thought the old man, "if I should try to return home they might wake up and find me gone and follow me, and take me back to the nest."

He began to collect knots and dry wood which he piled at the foot of the tree. After heaping them as high as he could reach, he gathered dry blades of grass which he put under the pile of wood. Then striking together two pieces of flint which he took from his pocket, he lighted the grass and this lighted the fagots. The flames ran higher and higher until they set fire to the nest. The wings of the birds were burned, and they fell to the ground. They tried to fly, but could not. The old man



The birds walked off in another direction

walked as fast as he could, and hid behind a tree. The birds walked off in another direction. They did not suffer as only their feathers were burned.

And this is the way it came about that great birds like the ostrich, the emu, and the auk, though having feathers and wings, cannot fly.

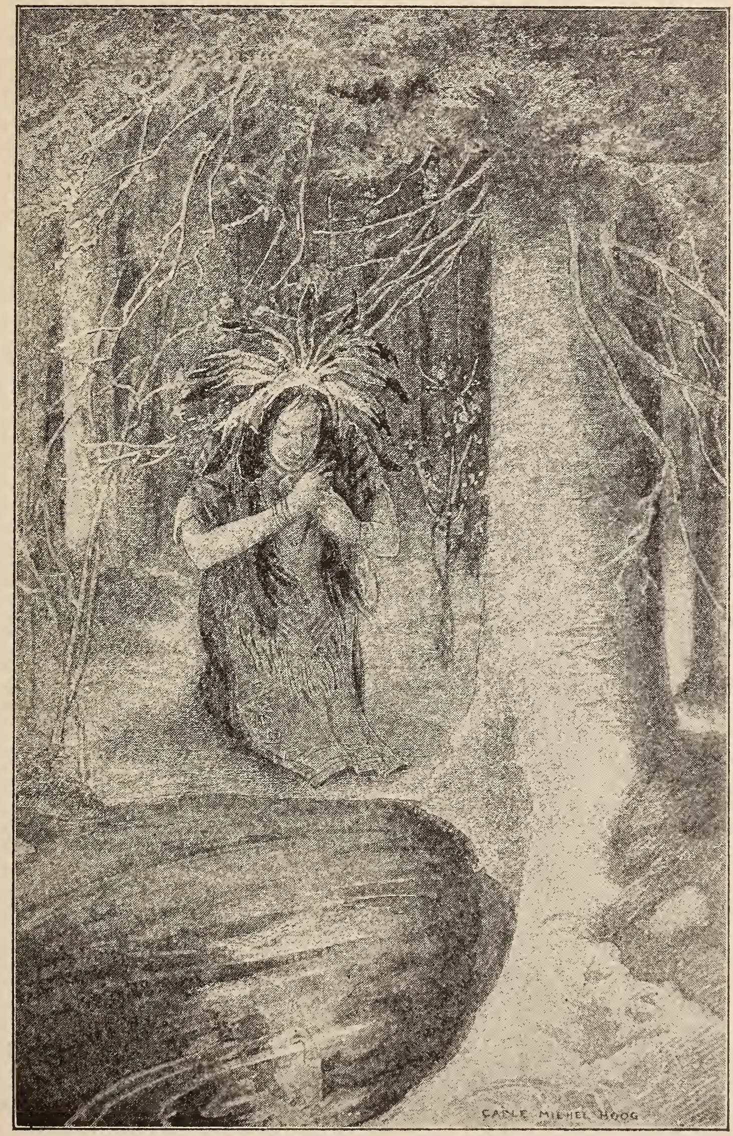
Thus were the birds punished for trying to prevent the old man from returning and feeding his hungry dogs, who had always served their master so faithfully.

NIONA AND THE MOON MAN

THERE once lived on the shores of the beautiful Lake Athabasca an Indian chief whose name was Wyani, and his two daughters, Wiona and Niona.

Wiona helped her father cure the moose and caribou skins, and put the fish to dry on racks in the sun, for food for the dogs during the winter.

Niona, the younger daughter, was very beautiful. She would sit by the lake where she could see her reflection, and arrange her hair, putting in her tresses large eagle feathers and wild flowers. She would make to adorn her feet beautiful moccasins of white deer-skin decorated with beads and many colored silks, and would say to herself: "Niona, you are so, so beautiful."


CARLE MICHEL BOOG

"Niona, you are so, so beautiful"

Then she would glance at her pretty feet, and her slippers beaded in wild roses and big leaves, and sigh, saying to herself: "How fortunate to be so beautiful."

When her father would call to her to help him, she would say, "Oh, father! Do it yourself!" or call to Wiona to help her father. Sometimes she would say: "I must make myself beautiful like the sun."

A young Cree brave would come to visit her. He was a great hunter and feared no man. One day while he was sitting near her when she was adorning herself, she leaned too far over the water to admire her reflection, and fell into the lake. He pulled her out, saying: "If you were not so vain this would not have happened."

"Do not scold me," Niona said, as she caught her breath and shook the water from her dress.

"You are very beautiful, but you are also very selfish," said the young man.

"All who are very beautiful are selfish," Niona replied.

"That is not so," said the Indian.

"Old Father Bear and Mother Lynx and Brother Fox tell me I am beautiful; even the birds, more beautiful than I am, say I am beautiful. Are they not proud of their plumage? Why should I not be!" exclaimed the maiden.

"You are very beautiful," the young Indian repeated, "but you are not kind to your father; and your sister is very tired. Why do you not consider them? They are both very good to you."

"I have no time. I must make myself like the sun; the beauty of everything comes from the sun, and I must be like her. She paints the clouds and rainbow and flowers and water—everything. I am the child of the sun and gather the beautiful things of color that I may adorn myself. You also think me beautiful. That is pleasing to me. I know myself that I am beautiful."

"Yes, but beauty is not everything," he replied.

"Do not scold me. You would not like me if I were like the Old Man in the Moon."

"I should like you better if you were helpful, and considerate of those who love and serve you; and mind, you better not let the Moon Man hear you speak slightingly of him or he may 'make medicine.'"*

"Shoot an arrow at the Moon Man," said Niona. "Who's afraid of him!"

Suddenly it became very dark, and the moon seemed to draw nearer to the earth.

"Save me! Save me!" cried Niona, but her companion had disappeared.

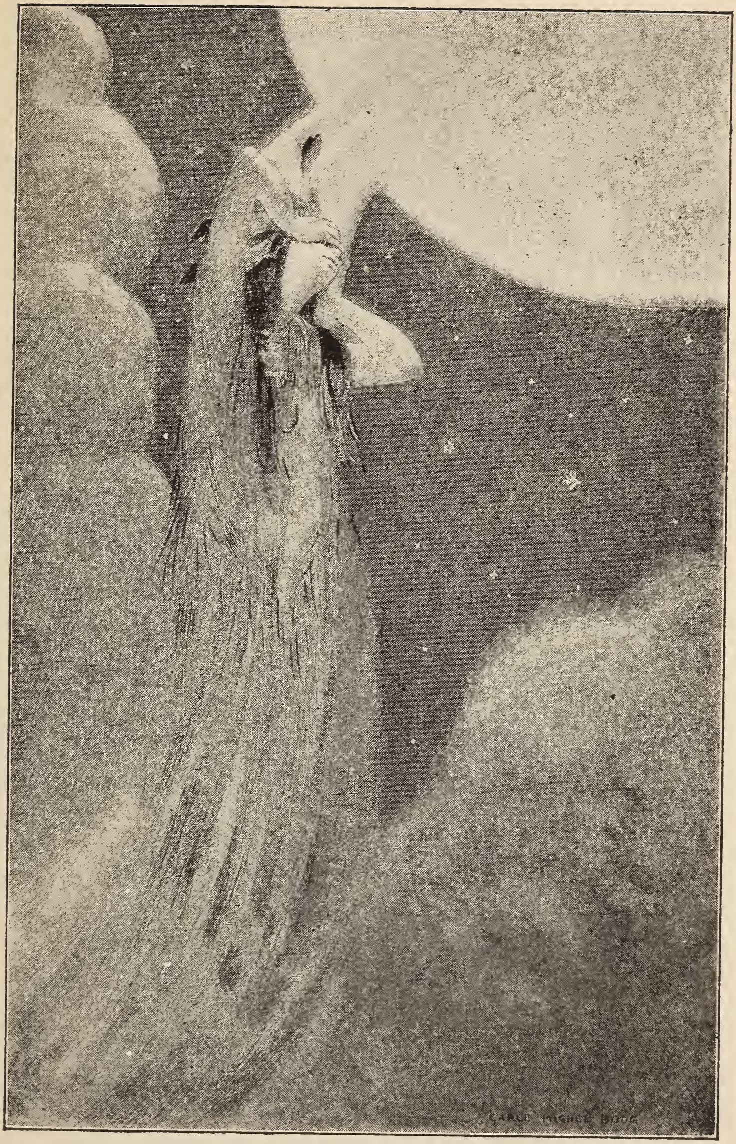
---

* The Shaman of the Indian and Eskimo of Greenland, North America and Siberia are supposed to have supernatural power. The exercise of this power is called "making medicine."

Niona thought, "How silly it was to be afraid of the old dead moon," and cried out in defiance:

"Boil the moon; save your passion;
Boil your lazy head,
Hiding thus in idle fashion
In your starry bed."

The Old Man in the Moon seemed to frown and to come closer and closer. Niona felt herself being drawn up and up; faster and faster she seemed to fly until the light of the camp-fires could no longer be seen. The stars grew larger and brighter and Niona began to feel very cold. Up and up she went until she could see the earth but dimly, and only as a round ball. Suddenly she stopped, and a voice said: "This is the end of your journey. You must live here. You thought only of yourself, of your beauty. Your time you spent in idleness. You did no good for any one. This is your punishment."


CARLE MICHEL BOOG

Niona felt herself being drawn up and up

Niona looked around. There were no flowers, or lakes, no trees, no people. There were only mountains of dead rocks, craters of extinct volcanoes, and deep-sea beds, but no water.

"What a terrible place," thought Niona, without speaking.

"Yes," said the Old Man of the Moon, "it is so. We once had all, but age came upon us, as it has now come to you."

"To me?" cried Niona.

"Yes, to you," he replied. "Look into the Grotto of Shadows yonder."

Niona walked to a deep cave and looked down. There she saw reflected the face of an old woman, older than any she had ever seen on earth.

"Horrors!" she cried, "How can I escape this awful fate?"

"There is but one way," said the Moon Man. "Come with me."

They ascended a high mountain and

looked afar to the "City of Good Works." One end of a rainbow rested in a great square of the city, and people, bejewelled and wearing beautiful costumes, were dancing around it. There was music, such as Niona had never heard in the woods, and great gardens with flowers bursting into bloom, and birds of wondrous plumage, too numerous to imagine.

"This," said the Moon Man, "is the abode of contentment."

"Oh! How can I get there?" cried Niona.

"There is but one way," he answered as she looked in wonderment. "You must go back to earth and there seek out those who need help and comfort; be kind to the aged, and share your blessings with those who most need them. If you promise to do this, you may return."

"I promise, I promise!" cried Niona, "When may I go?"

"At once," answered the Moon Man, taking a great bow and an arrow that was so long its head rested on a mountain miles away. On the other end was a little compartment, lighted with many colored lights, and containing chairs and a table which was set with the most dainty fruits and cakes.

"Get in, hold tight, and keep your promise." As he spoke he touched her lightly on the shoulder, and she began at once to regain her youth and beauty.

She stepped into the fairy car.

"Remember your promise," said the Moon Man sternly. "Are you ready?"

"Yes," replied Niona.

Before she could say more, she found herself flying toward earth; nearer and nearer she flew. Soon a light appeared, then another and another. Soon she could see the great lake, then her old father who was sitting outside his lodge. He was crying, "Niona, Niona, come back!"

"I'm coming!" she called, as the great arrow plunged into the earth, stopping just in time so Niona could step out and be welcomed by her father.

"I've come to help you gather wood, and to fish, and to sew caribou-skins, and make snares, and cure the moose-skins, and to hunt, and to draw water."

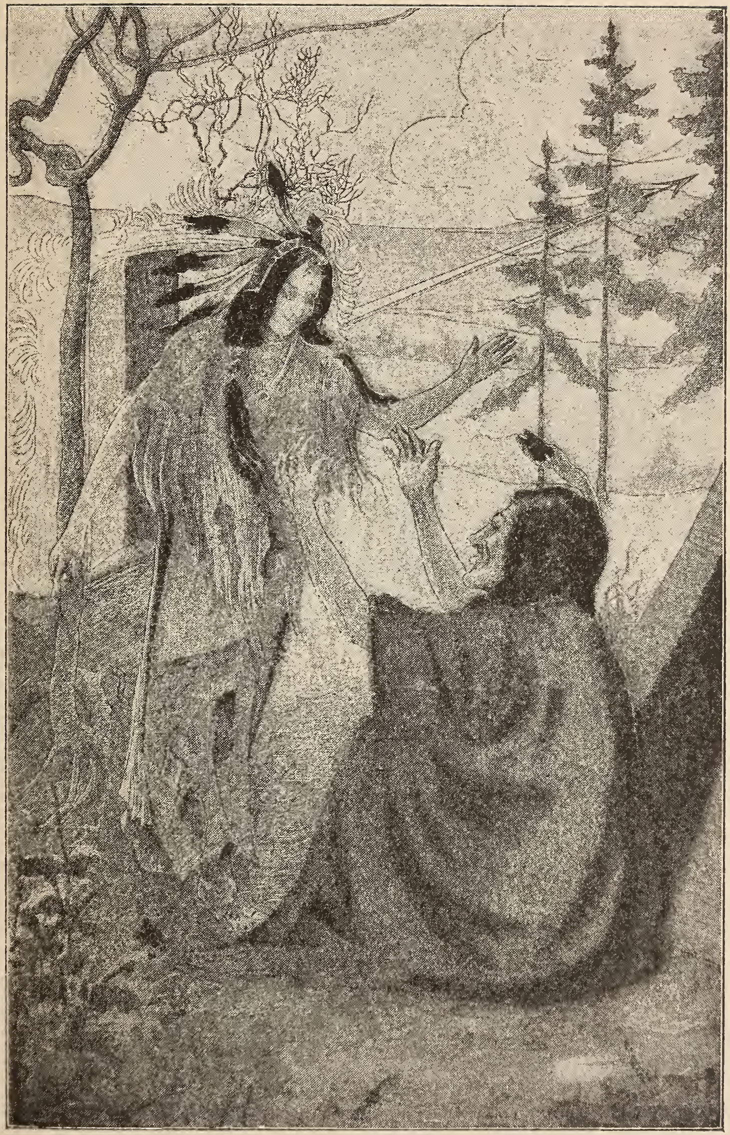
He looked up and smiled, he had grown very old.

"Where are your fine clothes?" he asked.

Niona looked down at her feet, and behold! she was in rags!

"I shall not need them now, good father. I have come to serve you."

For many moons she had been faithful to her promise made to the Man in the Moon, when, one day, there came from the forest, a handsome brave, with a deer slung over his shoulder—not the Indian she had admired before her strange journey,



“I’m coming!”

but one nobler and taller. Walking toward the old man he said: "You have a beautiful daughter. May I wed her when the moon is full?"

"She is a good daughter, and may do as she thinks best," replied the chief.

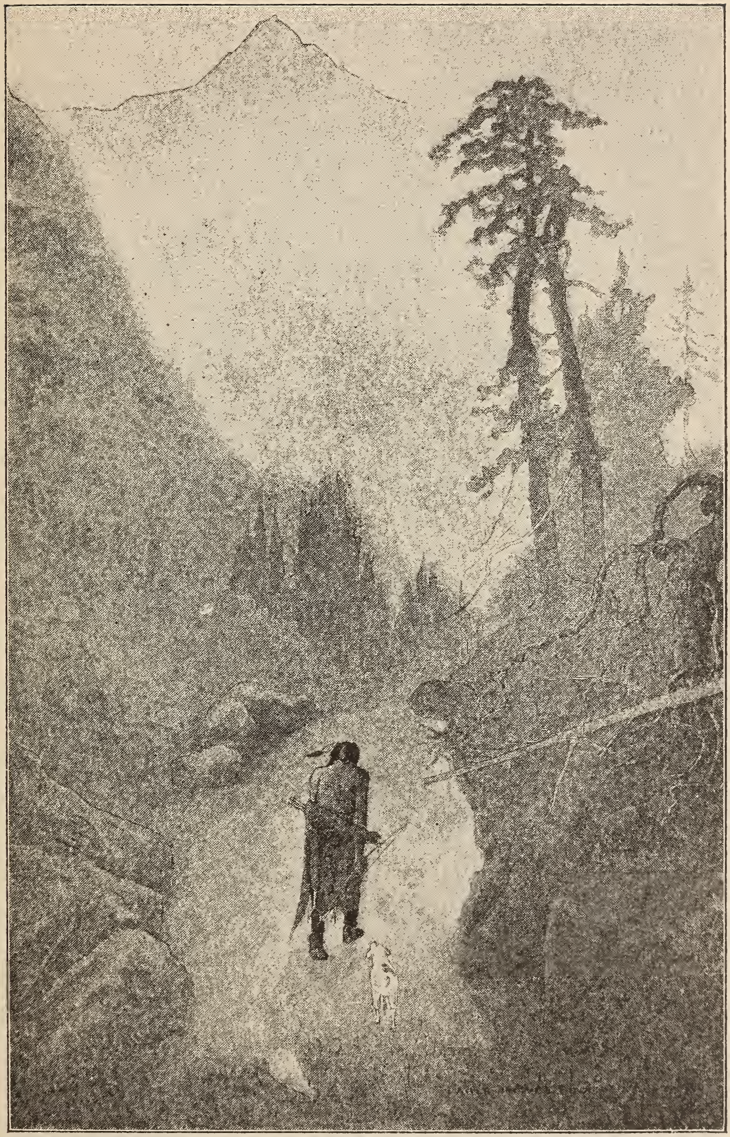
Niona grew to love the young Indian, and they were married and devoted their lives to her father as long as he lived. They lived to be very old, beloved by their tribe for their good works. When they died they were mourned by all who knew them. It is said they are now living in the beautiful City of the Rainbow.

WHY DOGS DO NOT TALK

AT the foot of a mountain, with his daughter Neti and his dog, lived Nudi, an Indian whose wife had left him. He was fond of both, but of the two he loved his dog more dearly as she gave to him affection and obedience.

At the time the incidents of this story happened all dogs could talk. Then language was very primitive, but as the dog has for nearly all time been a friend of man and his companion, each learned the language of the other, as does man when associating with a people speaking another language.

The dog, being also the most sociable of all animals, learned that man could hunt with more skill when in quest of food, and



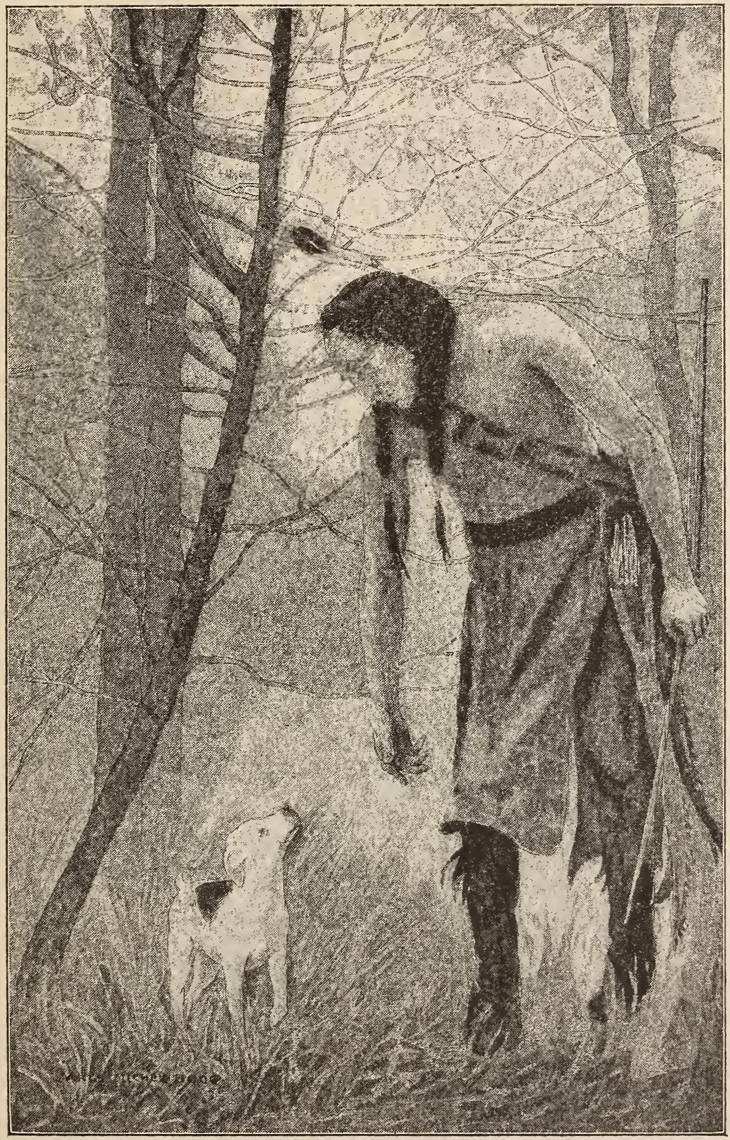
So Nudi and his dog, Happy, would wander off to the mountains

before he became his companion, would follow on his trail and devour the meat discarded by him. When the dog found man a kindly being, he would join in the hunt, each finding the other helpful. Man found the dog had more highly developed the instinct for location, and that his sense of smell and his hearing were more acute, combining also the pleasure he enjoyed in associating with man rather than with his own kind. So man and dog became fast and enduring friends, and as some one has said of the latter, "the most intimate and companionable comrade for man of all the kingdom of animals."

So Nudi and his dog, Happy, would wander off to the mountains in search of game, and fish the waters for trout so plentiful in the dark, winding streams that came down with such a rush from the upper reaches of the mighty mountain that Nudi called "The Giant."

Sometimes they would have much to say, sometimes little. Happy would always consider the moods of Nudi—if he was not disposed to talk, she would run along beside him if the path was wide, and if not, follow at his heels in silence.

There was something Happy had for a long time wanted to tell Nudi, about his daughter, but she would always hesitate, for she felt that perhaps it would not be right as it was natural for all creatures to love some one. Neti was very beautiful; she had many young braves who admired her, and she was very fond of their wooing, as she was also fond of the pretty trinkets they would bestow upon her. But the youth Neti liked the most, her father did not favor, so, unknown to him, she would go for long walks with her lover, and Happy knew, as she had followed them, that he had kissed her and said to her words of affection which Neti liked, even though



One day, trailing a bear, Happy told all she knew of
Neti's romance

she blushed and had taken her hand from his.

One day, trailing a bear, Happy told all she knew of Neti's romance. This vexed the father, so he threatened not to allow Neti to go more than twenty paces from the lodge, and to take from her all the baubles she had received from her admirers, this being the most severe punishment he could inflict. He also went to Tiki, the Shaman of the tribe, and asked him to make medicine and bring upon the lover some evil.

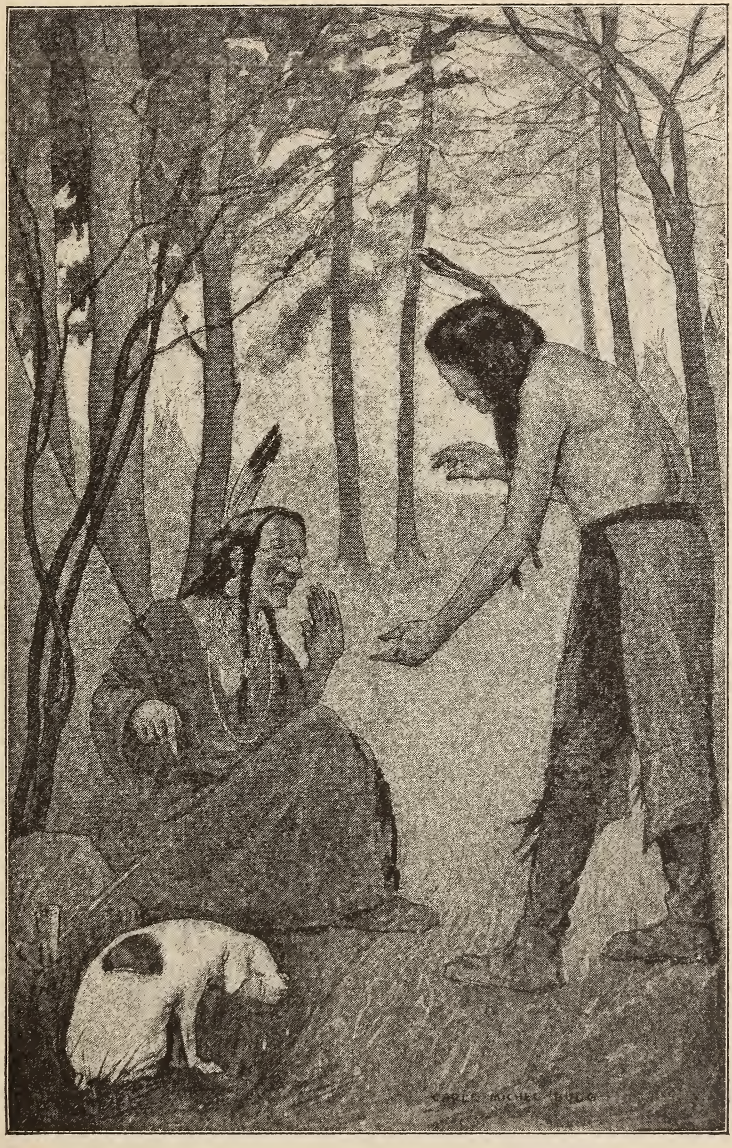
"No," said the Shaman, "It is not upon the young brave, but upon your dog that I shall bring punishment."

"No, no!" said Nudi, "My dog is my friend. You shall not bring upon her any misfortune!"

"Yes," said Tiki, "she has told that which she should not. We cannot ourselves judge of another's affection. We must choose according to the dictates of our own hearts."

So the Medicine Man used his powers so that dogs could never talk again; but left them the capacity to understand the language of all mankind. Though he took from all dogs the power of speech, he left to them fidelity, patience, and affection, and made them so nearly human that many who have loved them mourn their loss almost as much as one of their own kind. For has not the dog much of human intelligence with none of man's conceit, hypocrisy or ingratitude? Does he not cling to his master no matter how humble may be his lot or how spare may be his meal? He will even forgive those who abuse and neglect him. No matter what may be the adversity that befalls those around him, he is still their loyal, clinging friend.

What an object-lesson is this patient,



"Yes," said Tiki, "she has told that which she should not."

trusting creature that shares man's companionship, a companionship that if broken by the loss of the master, has sometimes ended in the death of man's best and truest friend.

MR. FISH AND YONI

YONI, an old Indian, had lost his wife by death, so, to the custom of his people, he covered her body with birchbark, and wrapped it in a large mooseskin. Then, with the help of his friends, he put the body on a platform high up in the boughs of a tall, young spruce-tree.

He then cut his hair very short, as a sign of mourning, and began to think how alone he would be during the long winter days.

The frost had come and touched the trees and bush, and the beautiful colors that the artist of Nature was painting upon them, just a little while before Nature destroyed the picture, began to appear in places here and there, all over the land. The fine birds that sang to Yoni, and the plain little wrens he loved best were leaving, one by one, to wing their ways to the Southland where the sun is always warm and smiling, and Jack Frost and his bearded old relation Father Winter are unknown.

Yoni had been very happy during the many years of his life. He was a good hunter, so of deer meat and fish he always had a plentiful supply. But his age, even with all the pleasant memories of the years gone by, meant to him in his solitude only sorrow and loneliness. He would have been glad if his wife, many years younger than he, could have lived to help him in his old age, but this was not to be.

He would sit outside his lodge, and watch the beavers working on their dam just across the river, and recall how he had told his wife, Noimi, who was very pretty in his eyes, that there was no one to compare with her in all the graces and virtues, that she must not go for wood when the nights were cold; and if she did, he would call her back and insist that she go into the tipi and sit by the fire, and if she wished, she could sew on the skins that would keep them warm during the winter.

He would waken at night, and out of the silence would come, from far across the lonely hills, the barking of the great timber-wolves, sounding like big dogs. Sometimes a stealthy bear would come with its cubs and tear down his fish-racks, and carry off the fish he had dressed and was drying for the winter. In the morning he would go out to see what damage they had done. He would never get angry, saying in a low voice: "Let them eat. It's very bad to be hungry." Then he would smile at their destruction, and with thin, trembling hands, try to straighten the poles.

Twice a day he would pull up his nets

that were made of willow fibre. Sometimes there were many fish, and sometimes only a few—but he never complained, for there were always enough for his needs now that he was all alone—having not even a dog. The preceding fall he had had two, but one had wandered away and he had given the other to Moni, his friend, who lived just around the bend of the river, and who was busy hauling wood for his winter fires, so did not come to visit him so often as in summer. Moni was growing old also, and his children had left him, all but a daughter, and she was blind, and not much help.

One morning before it was very light, old Yoni heard a terrific splashing in the water above the place he tied his canoe. He had heard the connie or pike making a great rumpus when trying to catch a frog, but the splashing increased, so Yoni started for the shore as fast as his poor old legs could go. There he found a strange and very large fish splashing and floundering, and the more he floundered the more he became entangled in Yoni's net, and the only one he had.

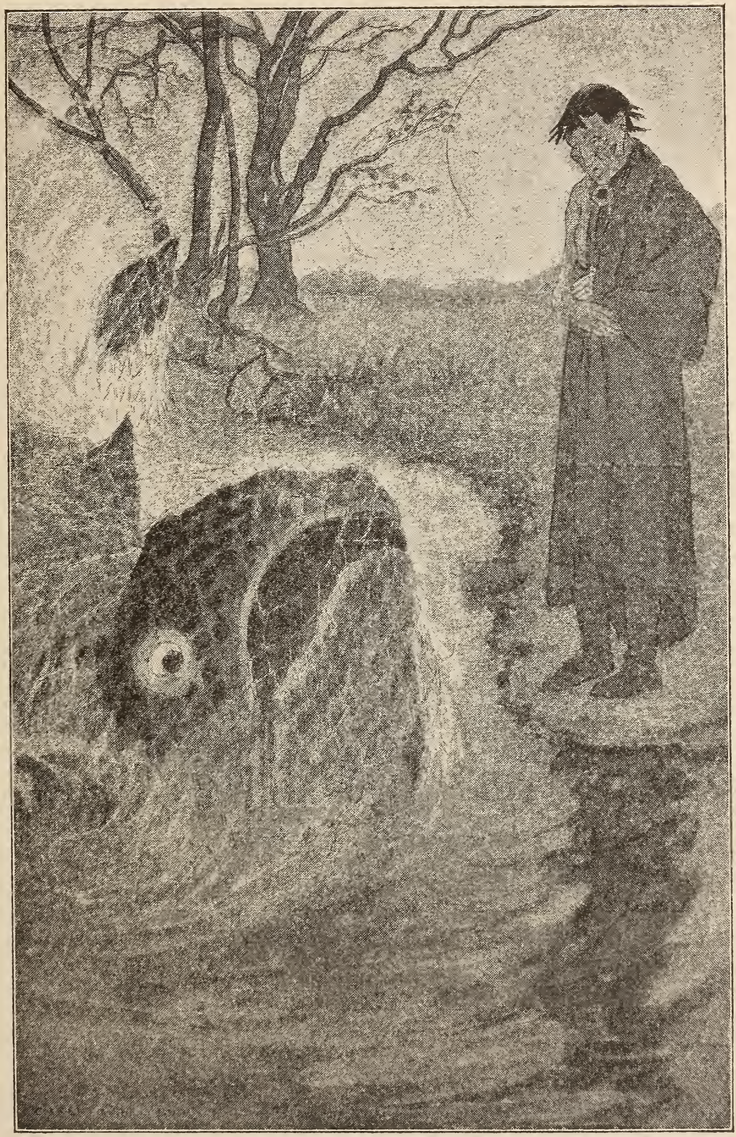
When the fish saw Yoni he called: "Come quickly and release me. I'm afraid I shall die. Come! I feel so strange."

Yoni made no effort to untangle the monster, who was just twenty-five feet long to an inch.

"Oh!" thought Yoni, "You are a fine catch; you'll be food for me all winter and much to spare; this I can barter with Moni for my winter's wood." And Yoni was pleased and smiled, and this he did not do very often.

The more the creature struggled, the more and the tighter the net held him.

"Hurry!" called the fish, not knowing what Yoni had been thinking about. Then he became perfectly still, and looking up at Yoni in a very appealing way said:



There he found a strange and very large fish splashing and floundering

"You are an old man. Get me out of this tangle and I will reward you."

"How?" said Yoni, becoming very much interested to have an affair with a fish that could talk.

"There are many places and people," said the fish, "along these great river ways that you have never seen."

"Yes," said Yoni, becoming more interested. "The Yellow Knife, the Dog Rib, the Cree and many tribes far away to the North."

"I know their language," said the fish. "Release me and I will take you where you will be among friends, and to those who will honor your old age. As you know, the rivers are long with many rapids that would upset your old canoe, and crush it on the rocks. Many of the portages are high hills, and many too rough and stony for your feet."

"This is all very well in words," said

Yoni, "but you may be like many of the fur-traders who do not always speak words that are to be depended upon."

Although the net was very tight about the neck of the fish, he managed to smile.

"Ah," said he, "fish who talk never are known to speak untruths. Release me, and I will prove to you my gratitude by taking you anywhere you wish to go."

So Yoni, convinced that he was talking to a truthful fish, waded slowly arm deep in the water, and cut the tangled strands holding his new-found friend.

"Just a moment," said the fish after the last strand binding his gills had been severed, and he straightened out to see if his tail and fins were in working order, "I'll swim out a little way to see if everything is right for our journey." So far from shore and nearly to the middle of the stream the fish swam.

"He'll never come back," thought Yoni, "and my net is in shreds."

Far out, and out of sight the monster had gone. At first Yoni thought he would never believe the promise of a talking-fish again, but knowing he had saved the creature's life, he thought he might keep faith with one who had so truly befriended him. Just as Yoni was really losing faith, the fish rose to the surface far out in mid-stream.

"I'm coming," he called. "There are a few scales missing, but otherwise I'm all right for a long swim."

Yoni was glad his confidence was justified, although he did begin to think the story was fishy, like others where fish were concerned.

"Wade out to the rock," called the fish. "I'll swim alongside; you get on my back and then we'll be off for anywhere."

So Yoni with some difficulty waded to the rock, and climbed upon it just as the fish rose alongside. Yoni got aboard, straddling the huge back as if he were riding a horse just as he had once done before he grew so old.

"Where shall we go, and what is your name?" asked the fish.

"Yoni," replied the old Indian, "What is yours?"

"Piscatori," answered the huge creature.

"What a strange name," said Yoni, "I am afraid I cannot remember it. My memory is not so good as it was years ago."

"That's not important," replied the fish. "Just call me Mr. Fish. I'll understand."

Yoni thought that was best, so he asked the fish to turn around and go down the river to a place where he had set his snares and traps the year before. So Mr. Fish turned around and began to swim so fast it took Yoni's breath almost away.

"Not so fast, Mr. Fish," called Yoni. "I'm afraid I'll slip off."

"Oh, no!" said Mr. Fish. "Hold onto my front fin. Look out you don't prick your fingers, the points are sharp. If you get cold, lift up the fin, step down, and you'll find a cosy room just large enough to hold you comfortably."

So Yoni, being just a little chilly, with some difficulty raised the fin, and to his great joy and surprise he found such a cosy little place like a little room, with the floor and sides covered with the most beautifully colored scales—just as if they had stolen the tints from an Arctic rainbow or from the inside of a beautiful shell. And it was so warm, and Mr. Fish said, "Quite waterproof."

Yoni had not been so really contented for many years. He sat upon a strange little seat, so soft and warm, and looking around he found to his great astonishment that each scale formed a little window through which he could look out. Mr. Fish was passing through the deepest part of the river, and Yoni could see so many strange water things, fish of many colors and shapes, turtles, eels, frogs, rocks with very beautiful clinging vines in which fish of many kinds were hiding. Yoni was in a maze of wonderment that was broken by the movement of Mr. Fish, who was pointing for the bank. Yoni looked out and recognized the place as the one at which he had camped many years before, and just across the river where the old elm was still standing, was the spot where he had first met Noimi, who afterward became his wife. This made him sad, but he felt better when he realized he had found a new friend and a very agreeable companion. Though he had not felt bold enough to ask, he thought Mr. Fish was much older than he himself was.

The fish swam to a great tree that had fallen into the water, due to the underwash of a swiftly flowing river and the grinding ice that cuts the banks in the spring.

"Get off here," said Mr. Fish; and Yoni raised the fin and stepped out on the tree, and then climbed the steep bank. Mr. Fish, seeing how infirm the old man was, moved a little, then backing up, raised his strong tail and gave Yoni a gentle push.

"That is a great help," said Yoni. Mr. Fish made no reply. He was thinking how unfortunate it was to be old, and of the "Tree of Youth" that grew where the waters of the Slave River flowed into the great lake of the same name.

Mr. Fish waited patiently for the old man to return from his wanderings, and when he did, his eyes were red from weeping.

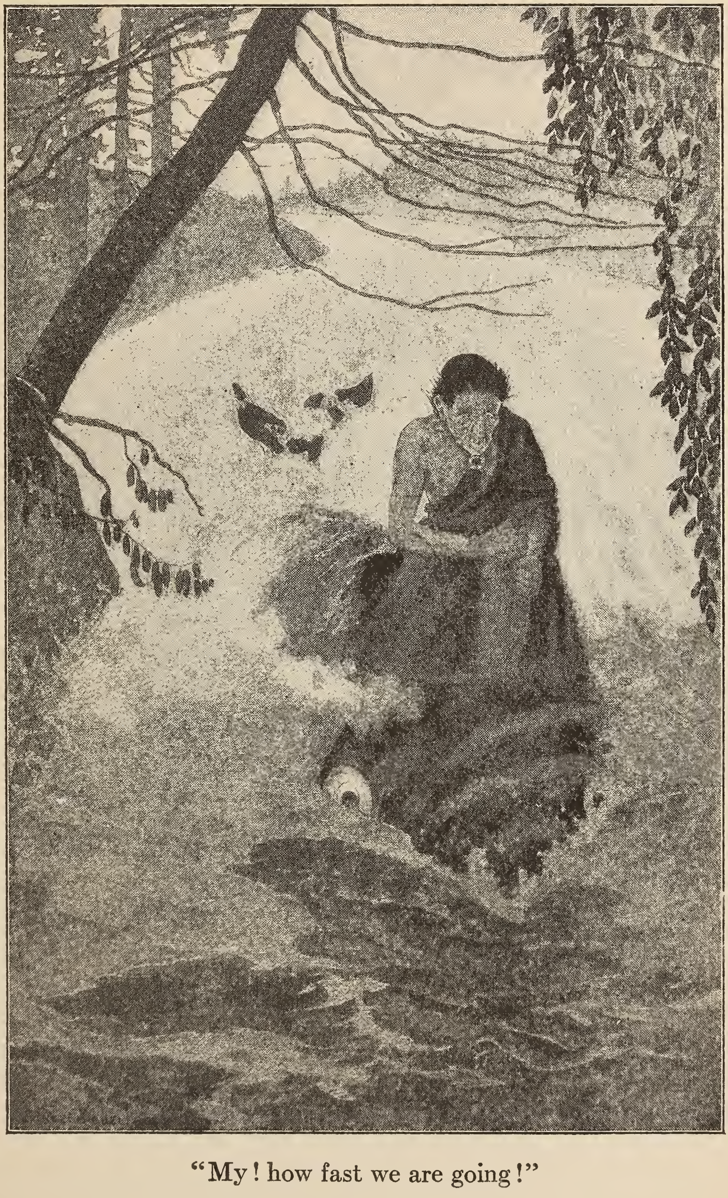
"Cheer up," said Mr. Fish, "we are going on a long journey. To go by canoe would take five or six days. If the water is not low, I can do it before sundown."

"Good for you," said Yoni, having great confidence in Mr. Fish as a means of transport.

Mr. Fish smiled. "I'll give the old fellow the greatest surprise of his life," said he to himself as he swished his tail to the right and to the left with the power of a great propeller.

"My! how fast we are going," said Yoni aloud; and he told Mr. Fish so, but he was too busy dodging rocks and sunken timber to have answered even had he heard Yoni.

On Mr. Fish swam, cutting the corners of the river, winding his way between sunken ledges, leaping great rapids in which many a trapper's scow had been crushed, as the little crosses on the graves on the banks can testify—struggling over shallow water, getting fast on sand-bars covered with wreckage from the great forests, held by boulders in narrow ways and pushing through with his muscular tail and wiggles—then down into deep water where things looked black and spooky to Yoni. For



“My! how fast we are going!”

hours, fast and slow, the great physical being worked like a mighty engine.

"What will become of me?" thought Yoni, "if anything happens to Mr. Fish?"

As the sun was falling and the shadows were dying in the water, the craft of flesh pulled to the bank, and Yoni, a bit cramped from being so long in one position, got on the back of Mr. Fish and looked around to survey his surroundings."

"We'll remain here to-night," said the fish, as he wiped the perspiration from his kind face.

"You must be very tired," observed Yoni.

"Oh, no!" answered Mr. Fish. "It's a bit strenuous when one has a cargo aboard, to get over dry land when one is accustomed to a water route. Going back you'd better take your time—that is if I don't go back with you."

Yoni looked worried.

"Why have you brought me so far from home?" he asked.

"Don't ask silly questions," replied Mr. Fish. "On the bank yonder you'll find some leaves and fagots. I'd help you if I could, but it makes me very short of wind to be out of water very long, so you will have to excuse me. Collect an armful, build a fire under the tree with the leaves all aflame with the 'Fire of Youth'—that one" pointing with his fin. "There are berries enough on the hill for your supper. I'll sleep in the black hole over there. It's near the shore."

Yoni went about gathering leaves and small sticks which he placed near the tree, as there were many spots showing little piles of ashes where fires had been built before. While he was standing under the strange tree, a leaf would now and again fall—it seemed to him, all aflame. One touched his forehead and fell to the ground.

He stooped to pick it up, but just as his fingers touched it, it disappeared.

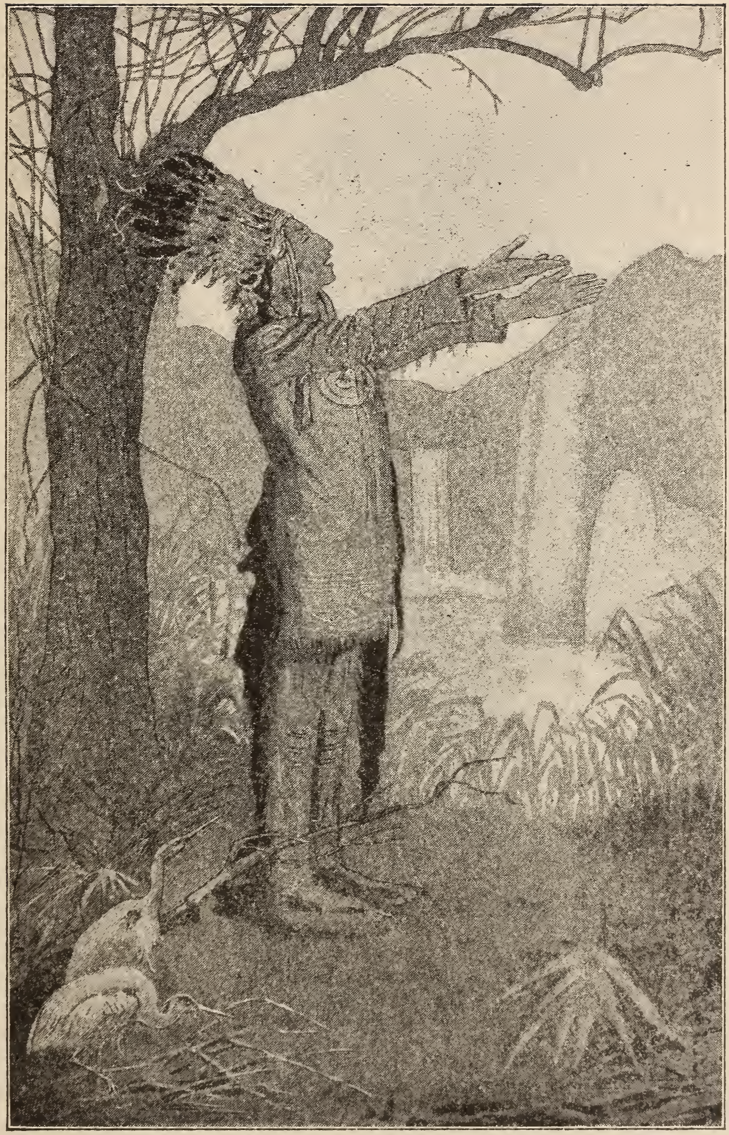
"What can be the meaning of this?" said Yoni to himself, and then he remembered Mr. Fish having said something about the "Fire of Youth." A strange desire to sleep came over him, and all night he slept, dreaming strange dreams of fairies and places and people.

The sunshine chased away a gray dawn and shone straight in Yoni's face. He turned to get away from the glare, and in turning he felt so strange that he partly awakened. Becoming wide-awake, he gripped the grass and leaves with a vigor long forgotten. He looked at his hands. They again had the appearance of youth. His limbs were hard and muscular. Looking down, he discovered he was wearing a beautifully embroidered suit of moose-skin made for him by Noimi many years before. Looking up, he saw that the tree under which he had fallen asleep was now bare of all foliage, and not a leaf was to be seen on the ground. Everything seemed strange to him.

"Mr. Fish! Mr. Fish!" called Yoni in a voice so strong it almost frightened him. "Where are you, Mr. Fish?"

Mr. Fish was so tired on account of his long journey, that Yoni had to call many times. At last the vibrations of Yoni's voice touched the ear of the fish, and he awoke, moved his tail, blew the water, and swam slowly to the bank. Of course, he knew what had happened when he saw the young man on the shore. He smiled so hard that three scales loosened by the struggle of the day before fell off, and went sailing and sinking down-stream.

"Good morning! . . and good-by! Long life and always happy days to you. Seek Noimi in the lodge just over the hill. I'm off for the sea."



"Mr. Fish! Mr. Fish!" called Yoni

Yoni called frantically, but Mr. Fish had gone so fast and far, he could not hear. He would not have come back if he had, having given to the old man "Youth," some say, the most beautiful and precious of all things.

FIRE BOY AND WATER BOY

AS long as the oldest Indians could remember, the Fire and Water Boys had lived along the shores of the great lake called Athabasca. They never seemed to grow any older; sometimes they were very good and very helpful—sometimes, very annoying and often destructive. When the Indians grew tired of their pranks and tried to punish them, many strange things would happen.

Far off the shore of Chipewyan lies an island, beautifully wooded and shaped very like a lady's hat. On this island, alone, for nearly fifty years had lived Ani, who seldom spoke to any one, nor did she ever go to the mainland to enter into the festivities of the other Indians living in the vicinity of the settlement comprising two old Hudson's Bay forts, a store of the company that traded with the Indians, a log church and a few straggling huts that fringed the woodlands on one side and the lake on the other. In winter the Indians trapped and hunted for the many valuable fur animals that roamed the desolate parts of this great northern wilderness, and in the spring and summer fished for their winter supply for their dogs that helped them drag the game from the woods, often many miles from the settlement.

The women made white and colored moccasins of the most beautiful designs, adorned with porcupine quills dyed in many colors, some of the strands being almost as fine as a hair. These were braided and twisted with silk cords also of many colors, making a charming adornment for the feet, even of a queen. Because the Indian women were not industrious, there were but few made, and these were all bought by the trappers, so people of the Southland never saw them.

Far beyond the island on which Ani had made her home so long, was another smaller one where Ani's lover, a very handsome Beaver Indian, had lived more than forty years before. He had gone on a long trail for moose and caribou and had never returned; and every morning at dawn, and in the evening at sunset Ani would take a wild flower that her lover had given her, and which she had kept in a squirrel-skin bag, and go to the edge of the lake when the sun made a path of gold away across to the far shore, and call in her feeble voice to the Great Spirit to send back her brown-eyed boy of so many dead years of long ago. But he never came, and her heart grew more sad as the years passed. There were so many reasons why she wanted him—her tipi needed repairing, it was hard for her to cut wood, the path to the lake was stony and sometimes she would bruise her feet and groan; but there was no one to hear or to help her. She would not leave the island, fearing if she did her lover would return and would not be able to find her.

One morning she heard the paddle of a canoe, and thinking perhaps he had come, she threw down her pan in which she was frying a portion of rabbit that she had snared two days before, and slowly crawled to the opening of her tipi and looked out; but it was not he—only two boys who were pointing their canoe directly to the path leading to her camp.

"Hello, Granny Ani!" called the boy plying the bow paddle, but Ani was so disappointed she made only a grunt as a reply.

"Hello!" they called again.

Ani made no answer, standing with a worried look.

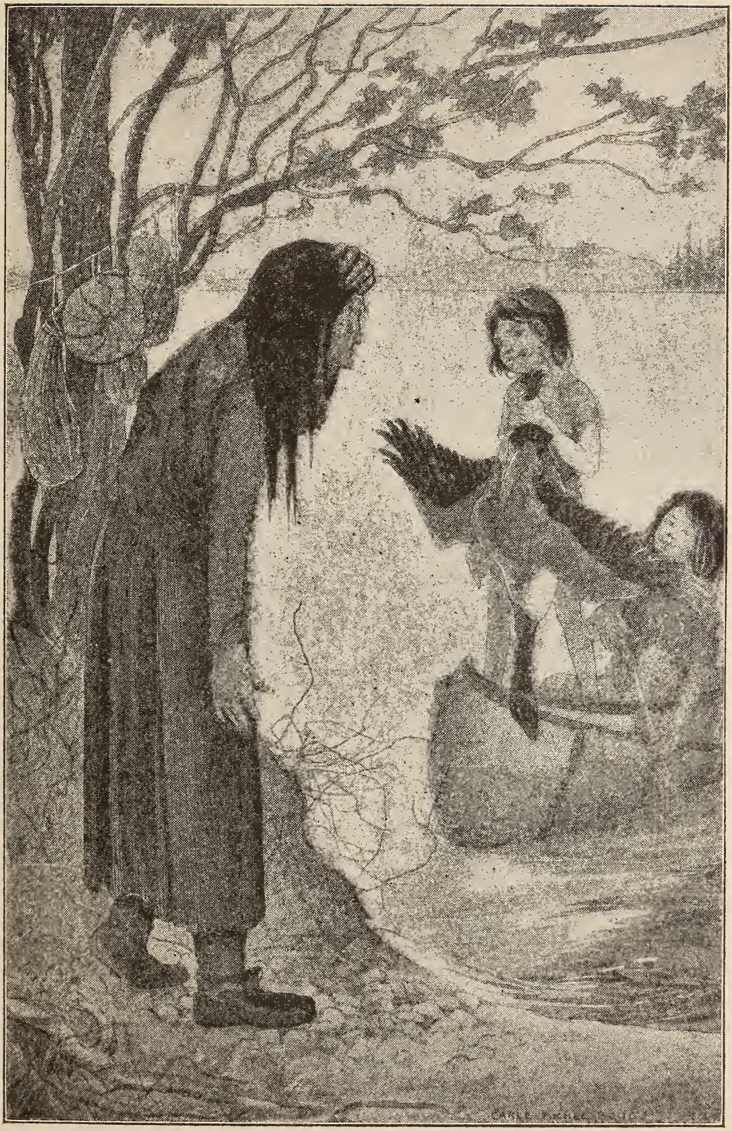
"Get some fagots," called the boy in the bow. "We have brought a goose and caribou tongues, and we will share them with you."

Ani seemed pleased and went for an armful of dry branches—she had not eaten goose for so long, and caribou tongue she had almost forgotten. She was so slow the boys went to help her, and gathered for her a fine lot of branches, dry and just the right size to make a quick and hot fire. The goose was prepared and strung on a birch branch, as also were the tongues, just close enough to the fagots to roast without burning.

"I have no tinder," said Ani.

"Never mind," said the boy with the bright, flashing eyes, and with the tip of his finger he touched the branches, at which they burst into flame, much to the astonishment of Ani.

"Spirits," thought she, "I'll not go too near them."



"We have brought a goose and caribou tongues, and we will share them with you"

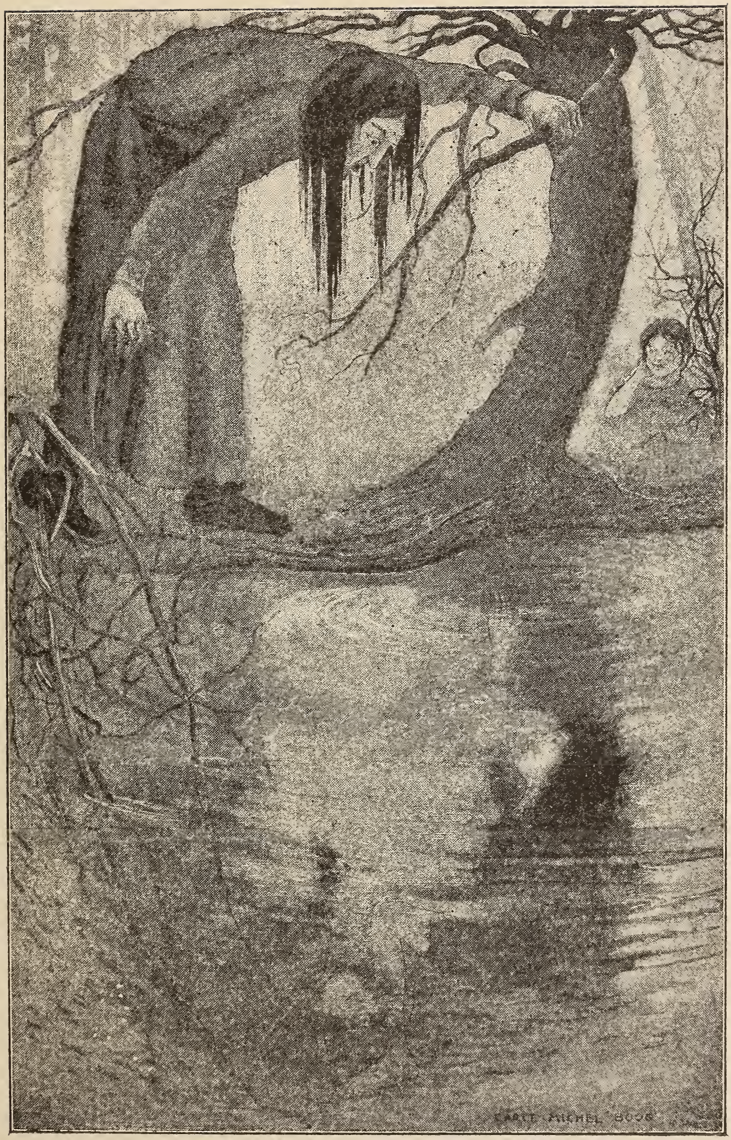
"Get a gourd," demanded the other boy in a tone Ani did not like—but she obeyed, and brought a fine big one hanging on long strings of caribou sinew. She handed it to the boy, and as soon as he had taken it, it filled to overflowing with clear, cool water.

"You are children of the Evil Spirit," said Ani, looking first at one and then at the other, and then at the fire.

This remark made the boys laugh.

The goose and tongues were by this time nicely browned, and the edge of the fire had spread to a pile of dry leaves. This was put out by a gesture of the hand of the boy who had so mysteriously filled the gourd. But this Ani had not noticed as she was now anxious to know if the boys would make a fair division of the food, as she was growing very hungry.

The first boy reached out and tore from the goose a leg dripping with rich juice while the other lad took from the stick a dainty tongue, and began eating. Ani waited for them to invite her to join in the feast, but they did not. This so offended her that she seized the nearest boy (who made no resistance) by the hair of the head, and led him to the water, pushing him into a deep hole where he sank to the bottom. Looking up to her he waved his hand, and smiled, making strange faces at the astonished old woman who was too startled to speak. Then going back to her tipi, she collected a large armful of leaves and piled bundle after bundle of branches until they mounted as high as she could reach. Then she went to the other boy with her pipe, pretending she wanted to smoke, and asked him to light it, which he did. Then she put the fire from her pipe on the ground beneath the great pile and blew until a flame burst out, the fire leaping high. Quickly seizing

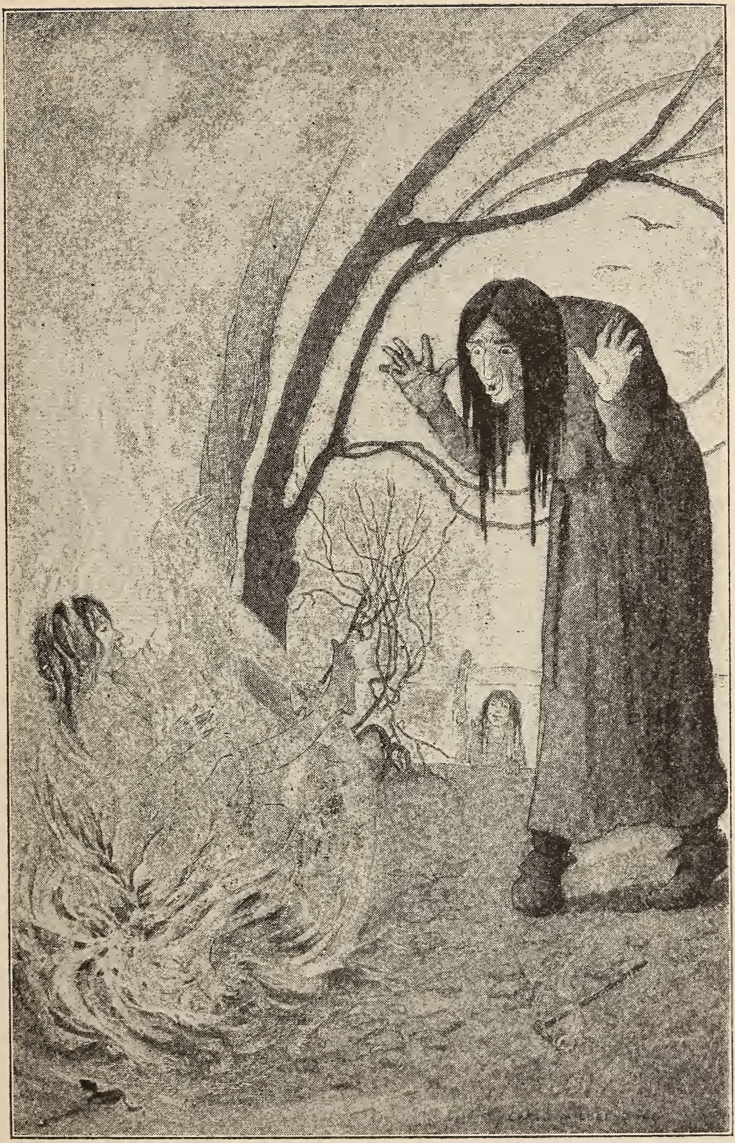

CARLE MICHEL BOOG

Looking up to her he waved his hand and smiled

the boy, she dragged him to the pile and pushed him into the burning mass. He also did not resist, but sat without discomfort in the midst of the flames until the fire had burned itself out. Then he shook the ashes from his clothing and walked back to his friend who had returned from the river, and they finished their meal together.

"Where is the old lady?" asked the boy whom Ani had tried to burn, and they went in search, finding her sitting behind an old hut that had been deserted before she came to live on the island. She was very much worried by their coming, and told them so; but they only smiled, and told her she was to have all the goose and the caribou tongues that remained, and that they, who were the incarnation of fire and water, the elements she needed most, had been sent to her by the spirit of her lover to hunt, to make her fire, cook her food, and to water the island so berries and herbs would grow—and to do all that fire and water could do for her in her old age.

The old Indians who knew Ani said the boys served her in every way as long as she lived, and that she was never so happy as when they were with her; and some said her young lover came back, and they journeyed together to the far-off land that the white man called heaven.



He sat without discomfort in the midst of the flames

OLD SPOT AND THE CUPIDS

ARACHNIDA, or "Spotted Spider," the name given him by his neighbor Yuti, who lived at the edge of the trail not far from the bear's den, had grown so large, and his legs so long that his snare was no longer strong enough to bear his weight. Once in a while he would go back to it, make a few extra turns, spin stronger strands, and try it out; but it was no use, down it came every time he tried. After repairing it, he would say to himself, "Never again." Then he would go back to the dark cave in the ledge that for many years had been the home of his friend, Bruin, who had wandered away, and had never returned. Nor did any one know of his whereabouts.

Old Spot, though having really no claims by right of possession to Bruin's premises, felt he was not trespassing. He had always been on the most intimate terms with him, and had served him in many ways, recalling how often he had nursed him when Black Bear had feasted, not wisely, but too well in the garden of Yuti, who had cultivated a well-ordered patch bordering the woodland near his lodge.

Yuti suspected Bruin—in fact had seen him leaving the patch where the corn grew several nights before he had gone away; but being on friendly terms with Spot, who was very devoted to Bruin, he never made any complaint, feeling it was better to live in accord with his neighbors rather than to plant the seed of hostility. "Bruin was hungry, so let him eat. The sun and rain will cause more corn to grow." This is what Yuti would say.

Old Spot had always lived alone, weaving his snare in the most likely place for his prey, just at the beginning of the trail as it entered the wood, and in good view of his apartment in the ledge. His spinners and spinnerets had the reputation of making the strongest silk thread in that vicinity.

Of course, Spot was proud of this, but he was getting on in years—some of his twelve eyes were losing focus, and he sometimes felt, though not always, with Bruin away and Yuti not as sociable as he would have liked him to be, that life did not have much attraction for him. His mandibles did not serve him with the same dexterity that they had possessed when he was younger, when he tried to seize his prey and squeeze it: this depressed him. There were also symptoms of rheumatism in two or three of his many legs, causing troublesome and disagreeable pains; and having many legs and long ones, the chances were that his suffering would be much more serious than if they had been fewer and shorter.

Knowing that these symptoms without

doubt meant the approach of age, he became very blue at times, and for days would not stir from his quarters to see if his snare held any food for him.

For two days and as many nights he slept with his long slender legs wrapped about him. The fall was coming on and he would often wake himself by chilly shudders, the nights being very, very cold. On the morning of the third day he was wakened by a strange noise. The sound came from the direction of his snare, but knowing that the young fox and the lynx made noises like real babies he paid little heed. Changing his position because three of his hind legs had gotten tangled, he settled again for another sleep of a day or two. Again the sounds like those of a crying child disturbed him, and again he said to himself:

"It's only a young thing that has strayed from its mother."

Before he had finished thinking, the cries became louder and more appealing; so Spot, being of a kindly nature, though age had hardened him as it does so many, decided to investigate.

He had been in one position so long that his legs, or a half-dozen of them, refused to work as he would like to have had them; but being very hungry from his long fast, he drew himself together, and with a big effort and a bigger grunt, stood up, stretched himself, and walked to the entrance to his den.

Just as he poked his face out Yuti, who was gathering fagots to make a fire to roast a fat rabbit he had snared the night before, called out:

"You've got a fine catch this morning."

Spot did not answer. Turning in the direction of his snare that was stretched from either side of the trail, attached to as fine a pair of white birches as ever plumed a wood, he beheld two creatures with great, tapering wings, beating and struggling for freedom, making at the same time, wee, shrill cries that caused Spot to hurry his pace.

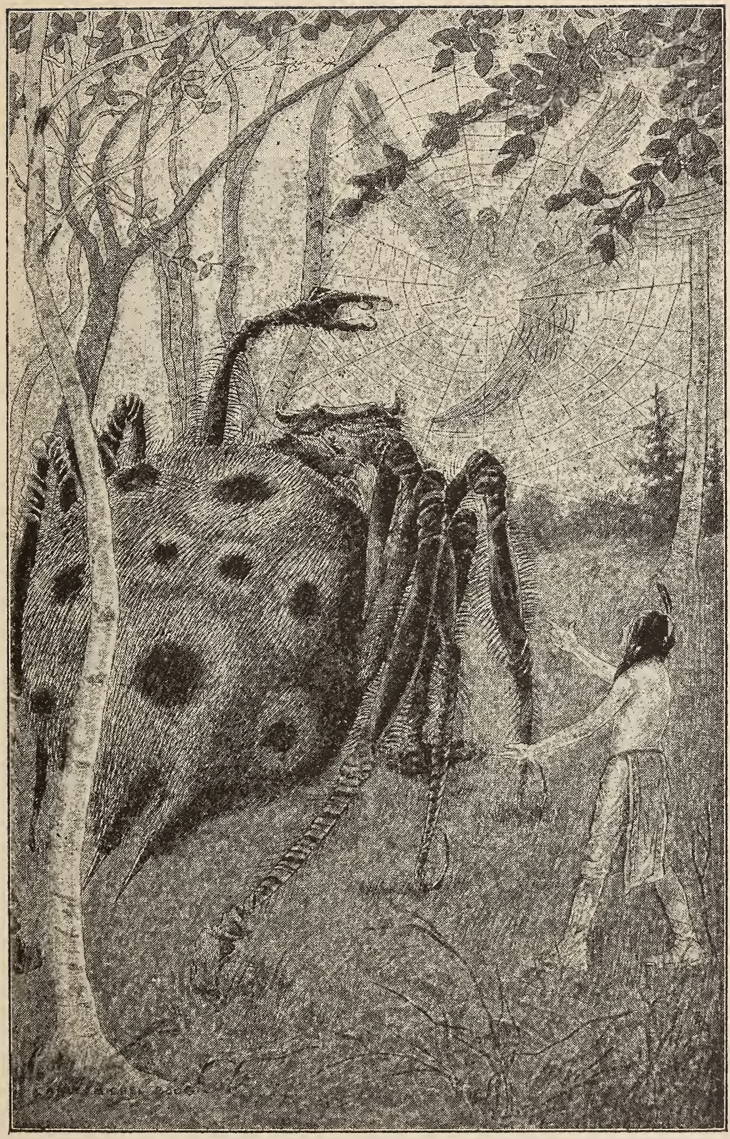
His first thought was for the safety of his snare.

"Here's a pretty mess," thought he. "How shall I ever repair it?"

All the time Spot was hobbling toward the strange, struggling things, their cries increased. They were real heart-piercing cries. The more they shrieked the more they struggled, and alas, poor Spot's snare was being torn to ribbons.

The cries were so terrifying that Spot was just a bit frightened, but having been always very courageous, he rather resented the feeling of timidity, and, quickening his steps, he approached the destroyers and the destroyed.

"Bears and beetles!" ejaculated Spot, "What have I caught this time?"



"You've got a fine catch this morning"

Fast in the lashings of his great web a brace of Cupids were beating their splendid wings vigorously against his snare. As he came near they cried more lustily.

"Where does so much sound come from?" thought Spot, looking at their rosy, plump little bodies.

Seeing Spot approaching them, they cried all the louder; but observing his venerable and kindly face, they suddenly became quiet, waiting to see what was to be their fate.

"Well, my children," said Spot in a gentle tone, "you've made a pretty kettle of fish of my only means of securing food. Where did you come from, and what are your names?"

"Get us out of this tangle and we'll tell you all about it," said the Cupids in chorus.

Old Spot gathered the end of a long strand of spider silk that was floating with the wind, and began to wind.

"Hurry!" said one of the little prisoners. Spot hurried as fast as he could, but the faster he worked his spinner the oftener he broke the thread.

"Be patient," said Spot, "The more haste the less speed."

"Yes, but I'm cramped," said the Cupid who was bound tighter than his mate, as he struggled to free himself. Part of the great web fastened to the birches began to sag from the weight of the chubby little victims.

"Have a heart," commanded Spot in a sterner voice than before. "There will be nothing left of my trap if you don't keep quiet."

"But you are so slow," observed the one with four dimples on his hand.

At last the sticky threads were tightly bound on Spot's spinners, and the poor tired little chubs, being free, stood up, slowly moving their wings that had been so ruffled and mussed by old Spot's food-catcher.

"You asked our names and where we came from," straightening out their wings and adjusting a few shaggy feathers.

"Yes," said Spot, scratching his head with his hindermost leg in meditation.

"Cupid is our name. We have no home."

"No home?" echoed Spot. "What is your other name?"

"We have no other name, it's just Cupid."

"That's news to me," said Spot thoughtfully, adding:

"Aye, aye! You're the little chaps that make a lot of trouble in the world. I've heard of you very often."

"Yes, and a lot of happiness," they replied timidly, in a voice not bigger than a wren's.

Again the little fellows flapped their

splendid wings, that were gradually getting back to their original form.

"Not quite so much breeze; I'm very sensitive to drafts," plead Spot, eyeing the pair with a feeling of pity.

"No father or mother? Poor kiddies," thought he.

"You have always been alone?"

"Always," they replied.

"Have you nothing to wear to keep you warm?"

"Nope," they replied, shivering just a little, seeing old Spot was being moved to sympathy.

"We'll see about that," he said. "Come over to my house, and I'll build a fire for you." So over they all went to Spot's den.

"What a delightful place," said the Cupids, looking around.

"You like it, do you?" said Spot.

"It's very cosy," said they as they entered the den, and cuddled in one corner where the leaves had blown in as if to make a comfortable bed for them.

"Would you like to make your home with me?"

They looked at each other with an expression of pleasure, each anticipating the reply of the other to be "Yes."

"Would you let us?"

Spot did not reply, he was so deep in thought. "What delightful little things to have around," he almost said aloud.

"Would you let us?" they repeated.

'I'd be glad to have you," trying not to express too much emotion, as he was pleased beyond all measure at the thought of having them for his companions.

"What shall we do about our wings; they are so terribly in the way," as they tried to adjust them so they would not scrape the rough wall of the cave.

"If you want them clipped my friend Yuti can attend to that," said Spot

"Would it hurt?" they asked.

"I think not."

"All right; can we have it done now?"

"We'll go and see if Yuti is at home," replied Spot, looking in the direction of Yuti's moose-skin lodge.

Over they went across the cleared land, where they found Yuti mending his moccasins.

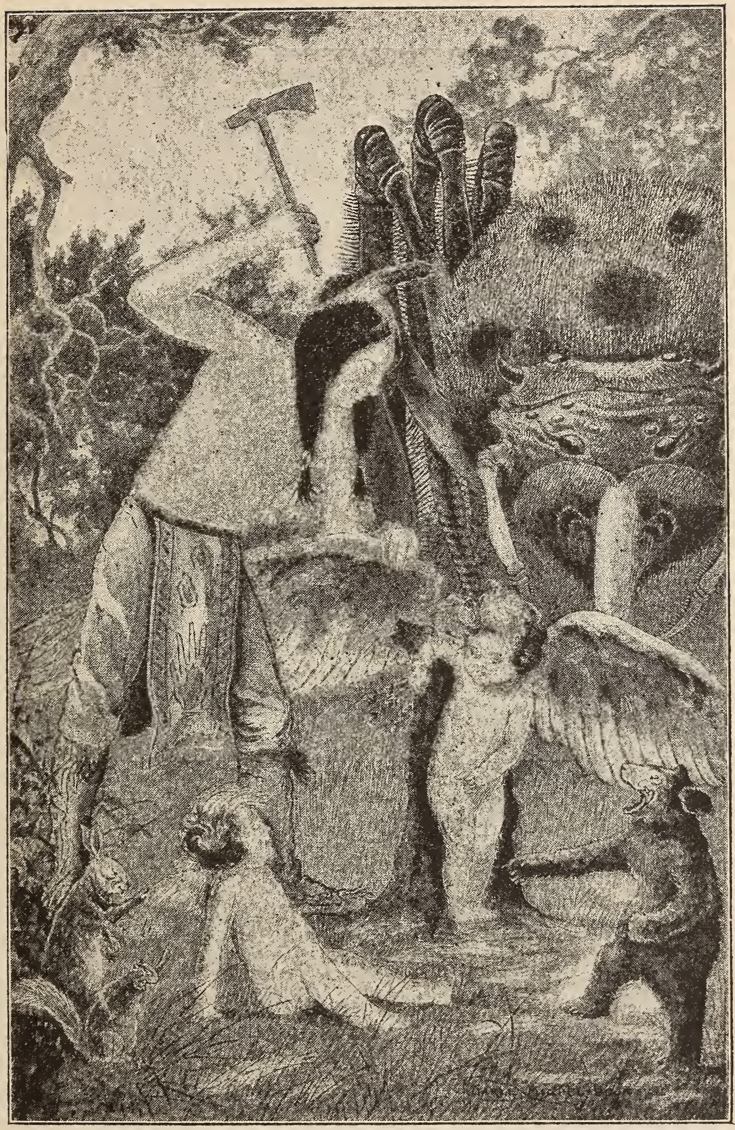
"I've a job for you," called Spot, as Yuti looked up very much bewildered at the sight that to him was startling.

"I've a little job for you, Yuti," repeated Spot. "Get your tomahawk and clip the wings of my little friends."

Yuti looked at Spot and then at the Cupids. "What a strange request," he thought.

Then Spot took Yuti aside and told him about his strange experience, and Yuti only smiled, saying nothing.

Going to his lodge he got his tomahawk and led the party to an old oak stump.



It was but the work of a few seconds and all was over

Then taking the Cupid standing nearest to him, he gently led him to the stump and placed his wing upon it. With one stroke off it came.

"My! that was easy," said his interested companion, looking to see if it hurt.

"Now the other," said Yuti, and Cupid turned around.

Down came the strong arm of Yuti, and off came the other wing.

"What a relief," sighed the little fellow, now free of his troublesome appendages. The other Cupid moved toward the stump. It was but the work of a few seconds and all was over.

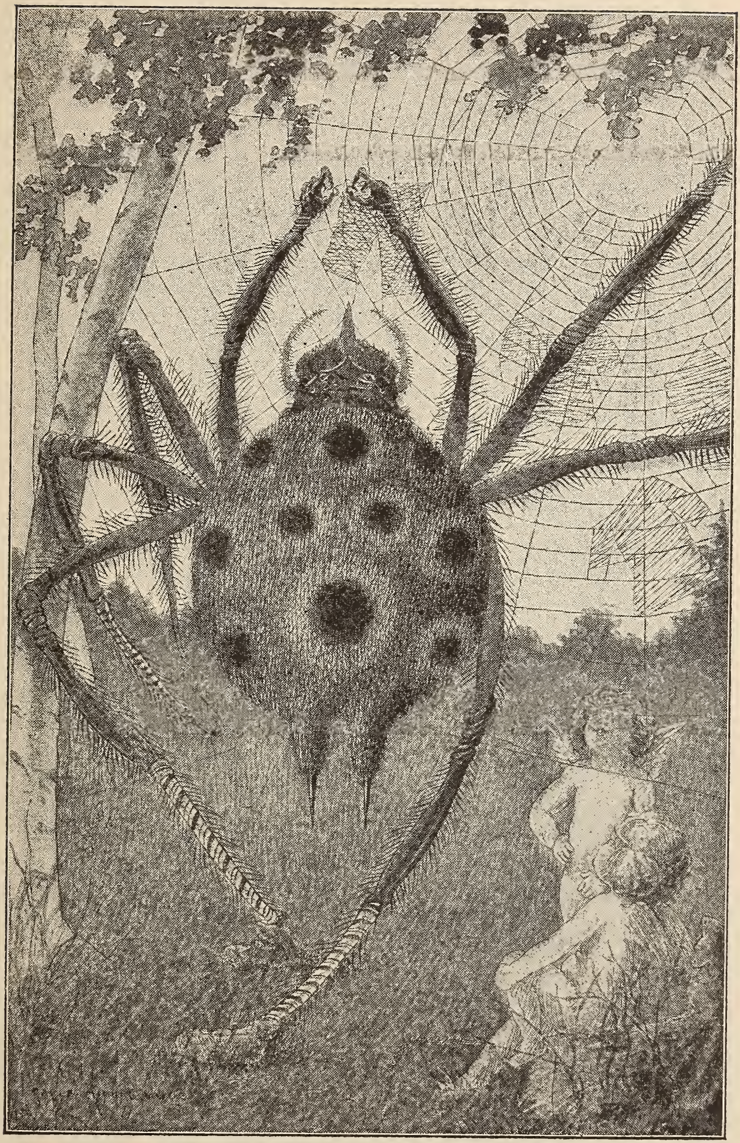
Reaching up and each taking one of Yuti's hands in his, the tiny fellows thanked him; then the little party started back to the den.

On their arrival the conversation became more general and less constrained, all becoming better acquainted.

"Something must be done about your clothing; we are liable to have snow any day," said Spot, in a tone burdened with solicitude, for spiders have the reputation of being kind to their young and those they like, even though the lady-spider sometimes devours her husband in a fit of anger.

"Let's go down to the snare and see how much there is left of it," he continued. "If it can't be repaired I'll have to weave another, for clothing you must have." After surveying the mass of tangled threads, they decided it would be best to make a new web.

For days Spot worked upon it. Then he began the patterns for the suits. Up and down, under and over, he wove, warp and woof, doubling it and twisting the threads so that the garments would be warm; drawing close and tight the strands that formed the strange little affairs to



"How really clever Old Spot is"

be worn by his Cupids—perhaps the only Cupids that ever wore clothes.

They would sit in admiration. "How really clever old Spot is," they remarked.

As the wonder garments neared completion, he added pockets, and made opennings through which the little wings that were left could pass.

Realizing how good he was to them, they decided to be very helpful and to serve him in every way possible as long as he lived, which was to be for a very long time. When strangers passed and saw the little things sitting close to Spot, some would ask: "How is it that their wings are so small?"

Then Spot would smile and say: "The reason Cupids have no wings is because—they do not want them." And then Spot would look at the Cupids and the Cupids would look at Spot, and they would giggle; but Spot would look serious. Of course, the strangers did not understand the cause of their merriment.

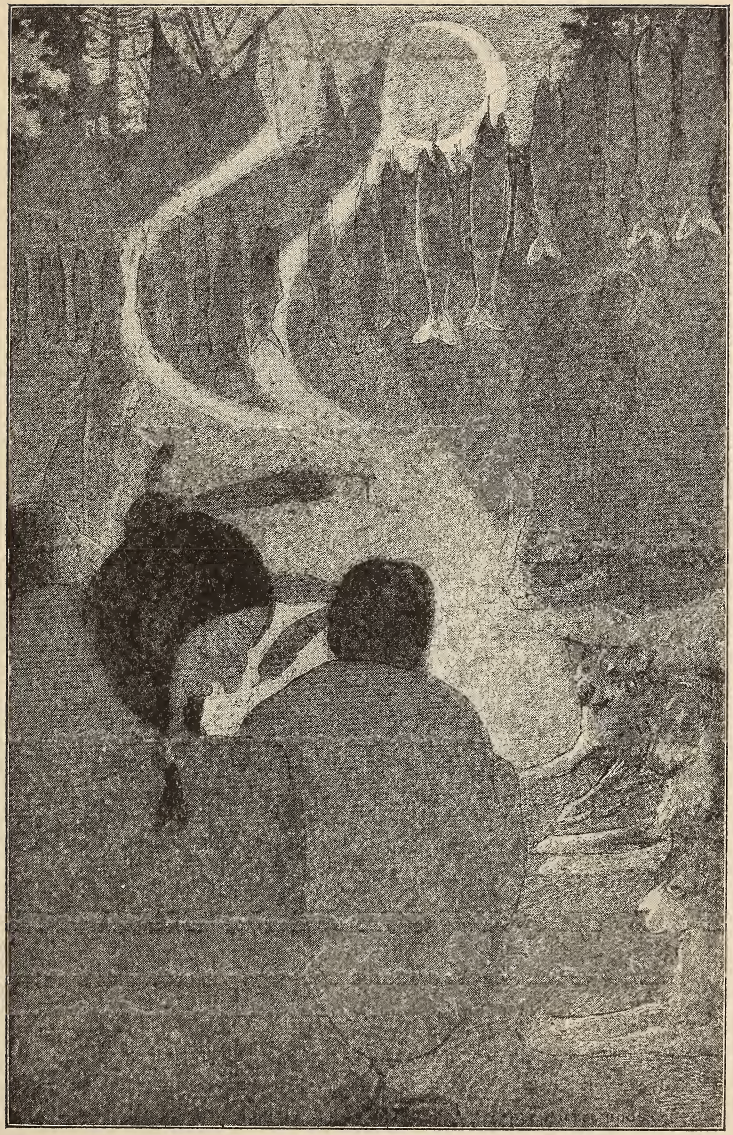
Sometimes when Spot put the Cupids to bed, and covered and tucked them in with sweet grasses and scented moss flowers to keep them warm, he would sit beside them when the tree-toad whistled his night song, and wonder if they had their large wings again, whether they would fly away, and leave him all alone.

THE UNDERWATER PEOPLE

ONE evening in the fall of the year, far-away in the North, on the shores of a great lake, there were sitting around the camp-fire a party of Beaver Indians. The winter had already set in, for the ice comes early, and it is very cold when the sun has gone to rest.

Hocini, the oldest man of the party, had fallen asleep. Around the moose-skin tents were scattered bits of wood, dried fish hung on racks, and five dogs, used in winter for drawing moose and caribou, were sleeping as near as they dared to be, to the warm fire, for the Indians are very cruel to their dogs, who really are very good to work so hard for masters who do not allow them to get near enough to the fire to warm themselves. The hoot owls had begun to make their strange noises and open their big, round eyes, for night was their day, and they must hunt food when they could see best, which was in the dark.

Away on the far-flung reaches of the hills the wolf began to cry and moan. He is a big animal of grayish color, sometimes seven and a half feet from the tip of his tail to his nose-end. Many say he came originally from Siberia when there was a land crossing from Alaska to Siberia, and that his great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers and many of his relations way back in the years of long ago came to visit our Northland, and liked it so much they did not return to the land of their birth. That land is now divided from Alaska by the waters that flow from the Arctic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, so if he did ever want to go back to visit his relations in Siberia, he would have to swim, for no craft that go to Siberia for furs would



They suddenly saw a man passing along in the dusk

care to have him for a passenger as he has a bad disposition, and cannot be depended upon when he is hungry.

While the Indians were sitting by the fire they suddenly saw a man passing along in the dusk. He was carrying on his back a strange blanket which was sewn with caribou sinew for thread, as the Indians had no cotton thread. It was made of dozens and dozens of muskrat skins covered with fish-scales all sorted as to color and size, and the lining was made of many, many squirrel-skins also covered with fish-scales, which were also well matched for color, making a beautiful and very warm water-proof covering for his body.

"Where are you going and what are you going to do?" asked an old man of the tribe.

"I'm going to become a young man again," he replied.

"How will you do that?" asked another old person.

"We will go with you," said one of the party, "for we like youth, for then we can hunt the beaver and moose in far-away mountains."

"Do as you please," the stranger replied indifferently.

"Let us go," said a young brave to two of his brothers-in-law, and they got up and went to their tents to get their bows and quivers and long hunting moccasins, for it had rained in the morning, and the ground was not yet dry.

The stranger called to them, "Hurry!" and seemed out of sorts; but the Indians paid no attention to his mood and smiled at his haste.

After saying good-by to their people, they joined the stranger and walked through a dark wood until they came to a lake shore. Suddenly the strange man who had been walking ahead of them, said: "Xwui!" and went through a hole in the ice to the bottom of the deep lake where his wife and many children were awaiting him. He did not greet his wife as though he was fond of her, and to one of his children he said roughly:

"Tell the men on the shore to do as I have done."

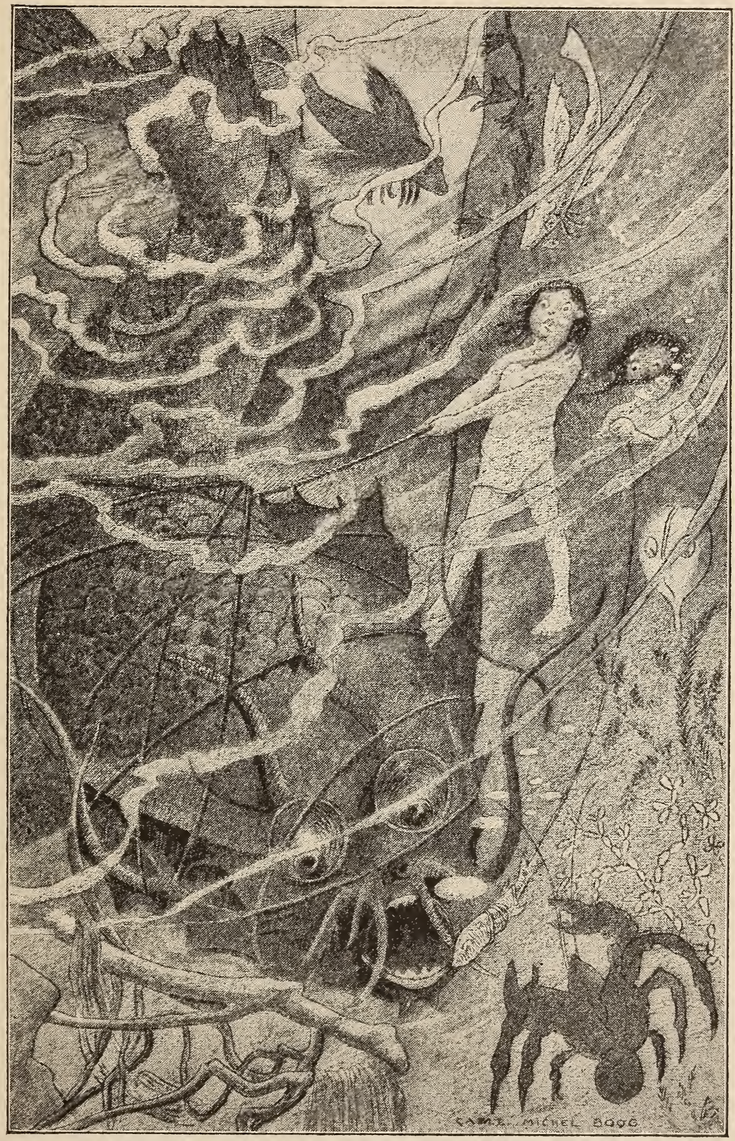
So the three men went to the hole through which the stranger had gone, and dove to the bottom. Then they walked to a settlement on the sands of the lake where there were many tents made of all kinds of skins—of moose, caribou, white deer, muskrat, lynx, beaver, and many skins the Indians had never seen before—and around the tents, walking about, were many people, who did not look at them.

The children of the strange Underwater Man would take bits of tough grass and make fish snares. Then they would wait for a big fish to come swimming along, swishing his tail and looking many ways with his strange eyes. The children would hold out the snare, saying, "To nai," which means "fish" in the beaver language. Then the fish would swim into the snare and be caught, and would say, as he wriggled to free himself, "Do ha-s tei-ul tuk," which means, "Do not kill me." Then the children would take the fish to their mother, and she would cook it on hot stones that lay near a spring of boiling water that came from the bed of the lake.

The stranger called to the three men to come to his tent and eat. They did so, and he shared the fish with them.

Suddenly some one stepped on the foot of the man who had asked his brothers-in-law to go with the stranger. He looked up, and saw a giant frog standing on his left foot. He could not believe his own eyes, for he had never seen a frog so large. The frog said to him:

"I was once a man like yourself, but


CAMILLE MICHEL BOGG

"Do ha-tei-ul tuk," which means "Do not kill me"

years ago, while picking berries on the shore of the lake, I fell into the water and became a frog. I have the secret, and if you wish to become a frog who can live both on land and in the water, which has its advantages, I will tell you where you can get some wonderful berries, red and sweet. Eat of them and lie down on the bottom of the lake, and after you have been sound asleep you will awake and be as you see me."

The man who owned the beautiful blanket was angered that the frog had given the secret to them, and said: "I do not like it that the minds of your people are so intent on us."

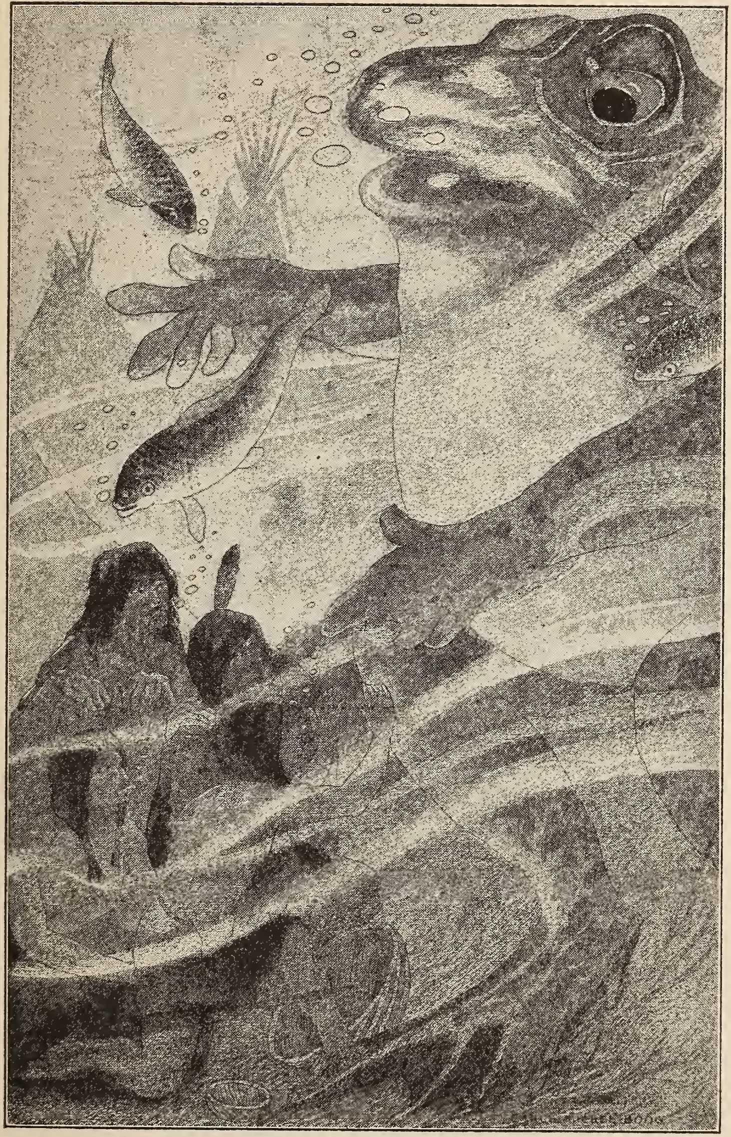
As the visitors were growing very short of breath from being so long under water, they said: "We will return to our people, but must go in a canoe as the water is making us ill." So the Underwater Man loaned them an old canoe.

"Take care how you use my canoe, for it is not very good," he called to them in a warning way. They paddled nearly to the shore. Then the canoe melted away. The men swam for the land, but when they reached it one was missing. The other two believed that their brother was dead, but as they sat on a big rock they saw his head appear and reappear, and once when his head was above water he called:

"I am held by the frog. Help me!" So the two swam out, but when they came near to the man he said:

"Go back; I am free, the frog has gone!"

The men swam ashore and stood up. When they looked again they saw a great jack-fish—they could not see their brother. The jack-fish swam toward them and walked on its tail upon the shore. Like magic it turned into a man, and they all returned to the camp, to tell the wonders of their adventure.



He looked up and saw a giant frog standing on his left foot

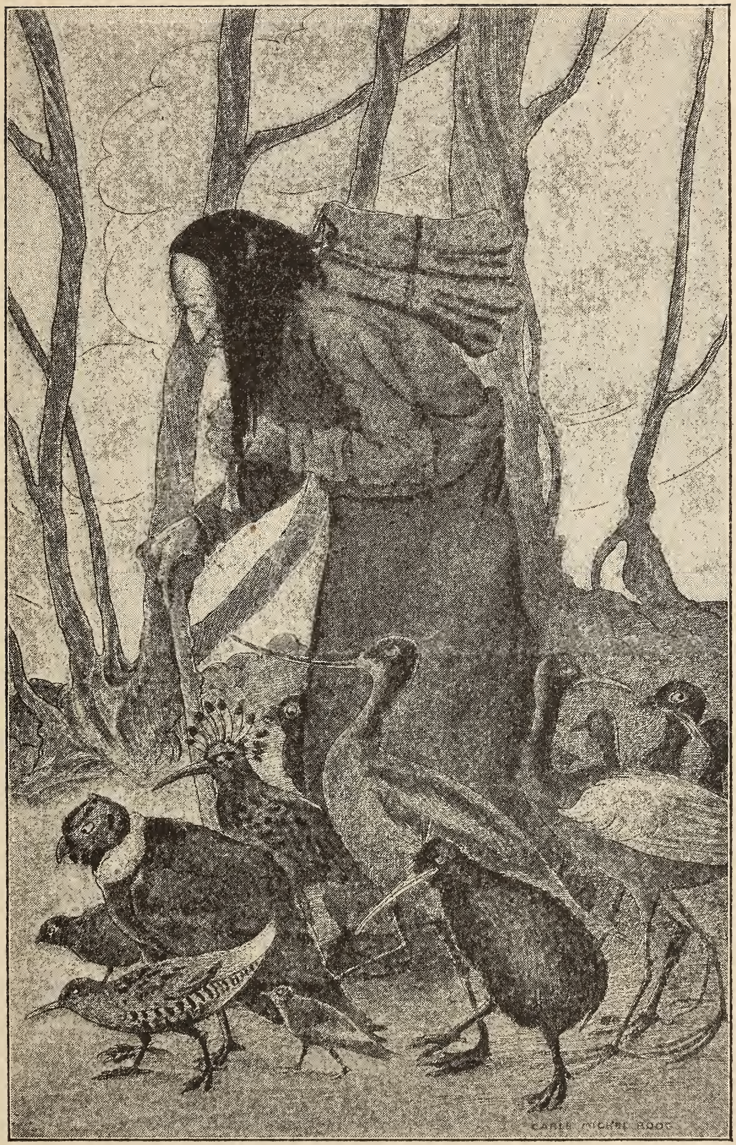
Suddenly the old man who had gone to sleep began to groan and cry out. His wife, who was also very old, said: "Hocini, my husband, is dreaming." The old man then woke up and said in a frightened way: "The frog, the frog. Where is he?" and his wife said:

"Poor old man, the frog is in the lake," and Hocini said: "I have been dreaming again," and his wife said "Yes," and laughed, and so did the old man.

WATC' AGIC KILLS THE TALKING-BIRDS

ONCE there was a man who wandered all over the earth. He had as his companions many kinds of birds who could not, or would not, talk or sing without his consent. He was a man who talked little but thought much, and noises worried him, especially the noises made by talking-birds like the parrot and the magpie.

In his wanderings he would meet many kinds of people who did not like him, because when they spoke to him he would only say "Yes" or "No" to any questions they would ask. Of course, his attitude toward all he met made them angry, and when he visited the villages the second time, many of the Indians threatened to kill him. The places in which he thought


CARLE MICHEL BOOG

Once there was a man who wandered all over the earth

he would be in the most danger he would go around and not show himself or his bird companions, for he was very kind to them, and they held him in great respect, although he had told them he would surely rid himself of their company if they should talk so loud that his enemies could hear them. They also feared him, for many times had they seen the way he had treated other birds, and they knew what his mission was.

One day, after a long walk, they came to the foot of a high hill. Around the hill and coming from afar, they could see great numbers of birds.

"This," said the man, is the "City of Birds," and no man dare go among them. If he should, they would pick his eyes out. Many times have I heard my father tell of his band of beavers who went among them, and of their fate.

"Let us go!" spoke up a great eagle.

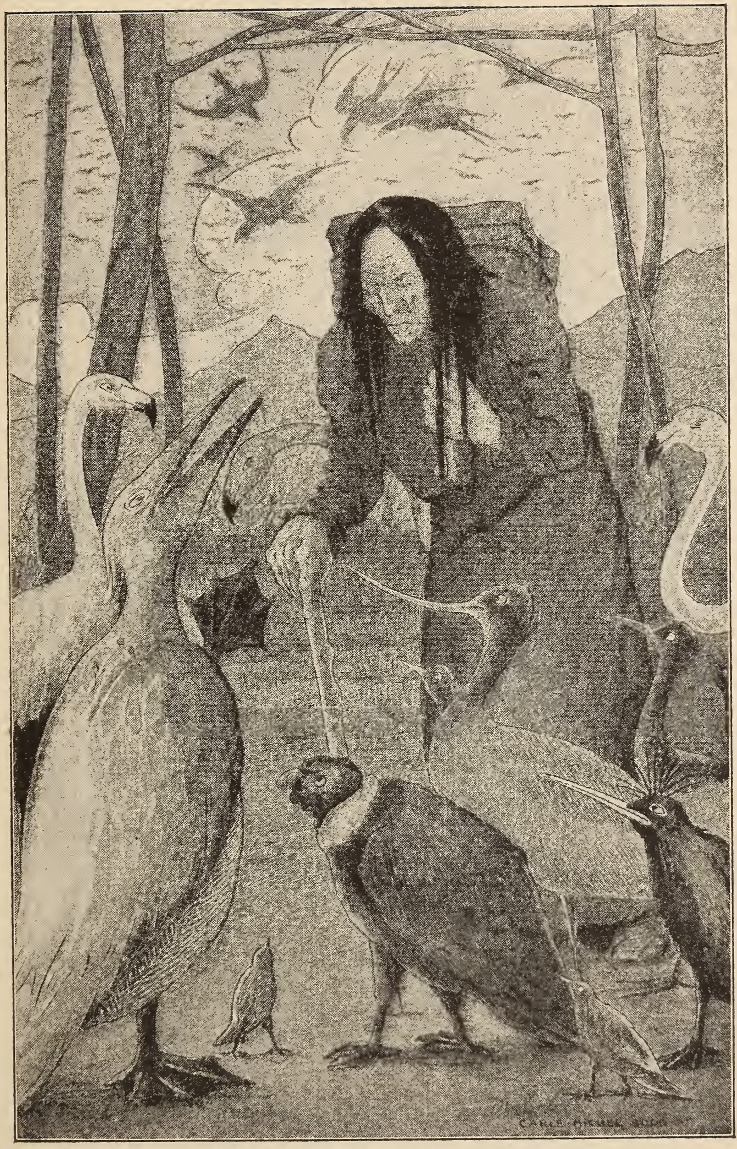
"I will defend you. My parents' nest was on yonder mountain, and I have many relations living among them."

"As you will," said the man, "but let us wait until night falls and they are asleep."

The eagle had been talking matters over with his companions, and they all, with the exception of a few of the smaller birds, decided to go, happen what might. So at dusk they started.

The road was long and dusty, and many times they had to wait for the vain birds to clean their plumage and arrange their feathers, but it was better so, because many of the older birds of the City of Birds had not returned to their nests. The man, although impatient, thought they might have been discovered if this cause for their delay had not happened.

As they approached the city, a night-hawk who was just going to work, gave a



"My good brother, what have you on your back?"

wild scream. This caused a great awakening in the town, and all the birds went to the public square in alarm.

The eagle said "Go on." So the party boldly went among the crowd. Some, I can assure you, were very much frightened; but they had great confidence that some of the relations of the eagle would be living, and would no doubt befriend them.

When the mayor of the town, a great pelican, saw the strange bundle the man carried on his back, he said: "My good brother, what have you on your back?"

"They are my songs," the man replied.

"Ah!" said the mayor, "sing them, and I will have my troupe of dancing flamingoes keep time to your songs."

"Those who dance to my songs, and those who do not, if strangers to me, must keep their eyes shut when I sing," said the man.

The mayor called to the crowd that was chattering so loud his voice could hardly be heard. So he called again:

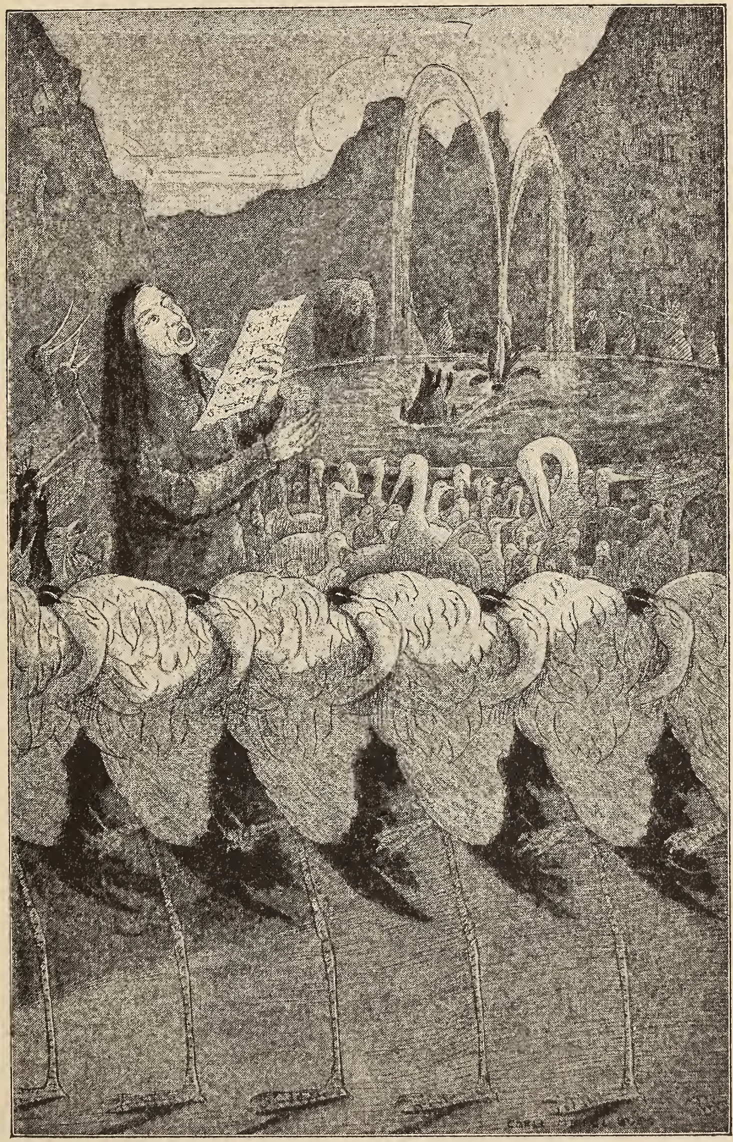
"Do you agree, my townsmen?"

He opened his mouth so wide that a great fish he had eaten for supper floundered out of his pouch. Before repeating his question he leaned over and picked it up. Again he repeated, "Do you all agree to keep your eyes closed when the gentleman sings?"

"We will do as you desire," many of them replied.

So it was agreed. A great fountain in the middle of the square contained many fish both large and small. These fish were for the use of the mayor only, as he was getting old, and to climb the long hill from the river made him both tired and cross. So the man said:

"Come near the fountain. My songs are of running water and brooks, and it will



And he began to sing in a harsh voice

inspire me to sing them more to your pleasure."

So the crowd moved near the big basin full of water, deep and very wet.

"Bring your flamingoes and I will begin," said the man.

The eagle called him aside and said: "During your song they will know because their eyes are shut, how dark it is for the thousands they have made blind." The man did not reply, but walked close to the fountain.

"Eyes shut!" he called loudly, and the people all closed their eyes and he began to sing in a harsh voice, for he could not sing, and disliked any kind of music.

"I will sing of Mayor Pelican,
  And of his pretty daughter,—
And of a dashing pelican
  Who in matrimony sought her.
And while I sing I'll wring your necks,
  And throw you in the water."

All the people smiled but kept their eyes closed, fearing he would stop his funny song. So he continued to wring their necks and throw them into the deep water of the fountain.

After he had treated them all alike, he said to his companions:

"We are quite safe now; let us remain here until morning, as there are many places of shelter and plenty of food."

So it was agreed, and they resumed their journey about dawn the following day.

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